AUGUST

74

Polyhedron®

NEWSZINE

RPGA® NETWORK

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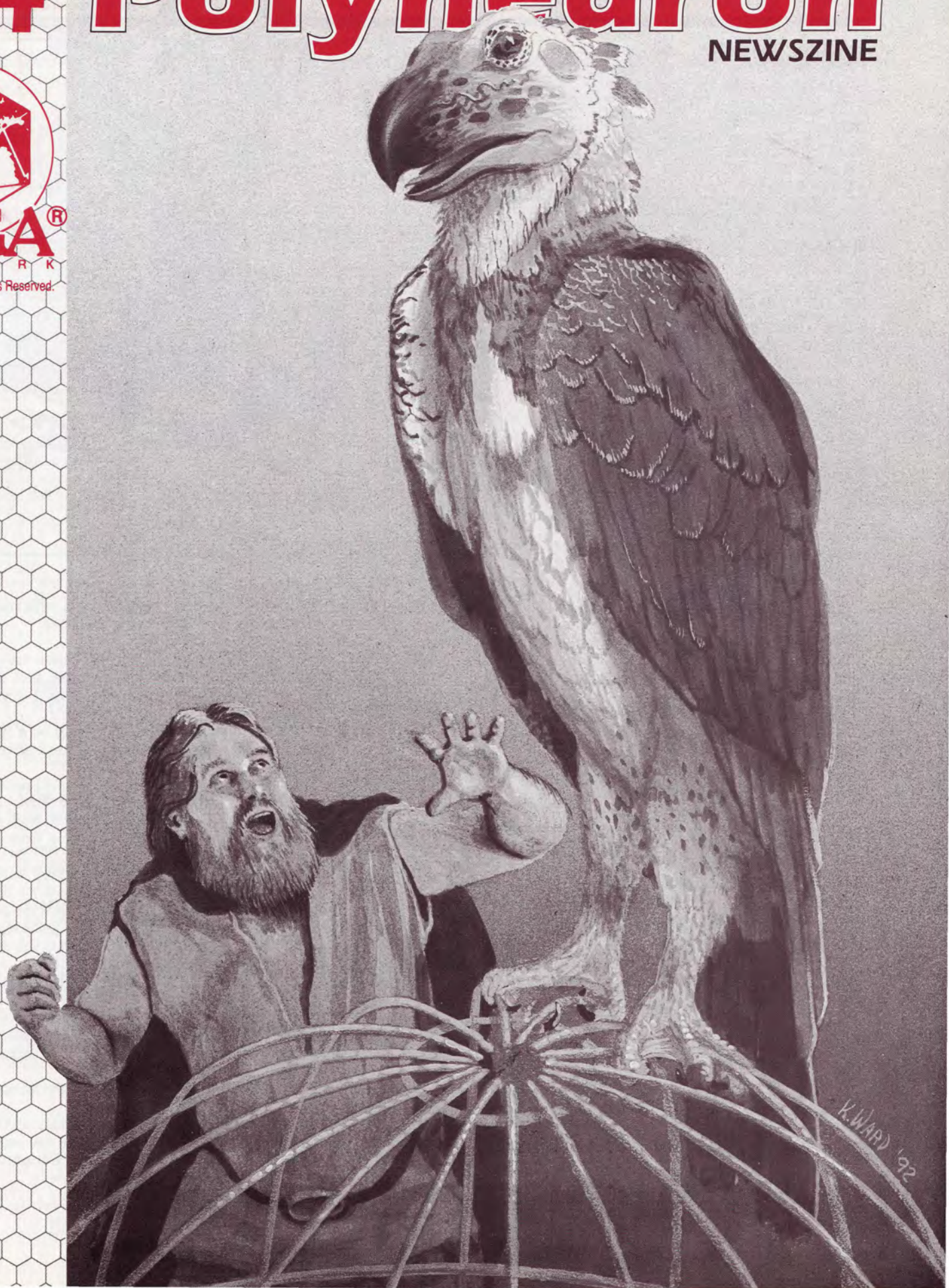

Geran by Dick Smalley

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CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Deserts
FREQUENCY:	Very Rare
ORGANIZATION:	Tribal
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day
DIET:	Omnivorous
INTELLIGENCE:	Exceptional
TREASURE:	A
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful Neutral
NO. APPEARING:	40-160
ARMOR CLASS:	5
MOVEMENT:	9
HIT DICE:	4+1
THAC0:	17
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1 or 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	by weapon or 1-8/1-8
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	+3 To Hit with Geran Impaler
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Invisibility, +2 bonus on all saves
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	10%
SIZE:	M (6′)
MORALE:	Elite (13-14)
X.P. Value:	420
Precept	420
Thane	650
Jarl	975
Chieftain	1,400

Psionics Summary:

Level	Dis/Sci/Dev	Attack/Defense	Score	PSPs
5	2/4/10	EW,II/IF,M-,MB,TW	15	95

Psychokinesis: Sciences—*telekinesis, detonate*; Devotions—*ballistic attack, inertial barrier, molecular agitation, molecular manipulation*
Telepathy: Sciences—*mind link, tower of iron will*; Devotions—*ego whip, contact, id insinuation, intellect fortress, mind bar, mind blank*

Geran are found primarily in the rocky badlands of Athas. Most are hardworking, peaceful beings who strive to overcome the harsh climate of their homeland. Their communities are orderly and law-abiding. Outsiders are viewed with suspicion.

Because of the intense heat, geran wear little clothing, usually just a loin cloth, and upon rare occasions, ornamental jewelry. When preparing for battle, a geran also adorns himself with a belt decorated with the skulls of those he has killed. The skulls are intended to warn away opponents.

Geran speak their own tongue in addition to the language of the Gith and Belgoi. There is a 10% chance a geran will be able to speak the local Common dialect.

Combat: Geran prefer to use their psionic talents to frighten intruders from their domain. However, if the enemy cannot be scared, the geran resort to a harmful exhibition of their psionic powers.

When forced into melee, geran typically attack with a weapon called an impaler. This is a polearm that looks like a javelin on one end; the other end is capped with a large, curved, razor-sharp blade. The blade is used to sever victims' heads to be added to the geran's collection.

If a geran is disarmed, he can attack twice a round with clawed hands. Each attack delivers 1-8 points of damage. The geran view such battle tactics as barbaric, resorting to them only in extreme situations.

While in their home terrain geran blend in with their surroundings so that they are effectively *invisible.*

Habitat/Society: Geran live in hillside abodes carved out of the badlands rock. The homes are simple and usually house one family consisting of 1-2 adult males, 1-3 adult females, and 2-8 young.

For every 20 geran encountered, there will be a thane of 5+2 HD and 100 PSPs. The thane acts as the leader of the geran war units.

If 50 or more geran are encountered, they will be led by a jarl of 6+3 HD, 120 PSPs, and a psionic score of 16, plus one additional psionic discipline. The jarl is held in high esteem in geran society and is always guarded by a force of five geran and one thane.

When 120 or more geran are encountered, they will be led by a high chieftain. The high chieftain has 8+2 HD, has 150 PSPs, and is psionic level 8. He has a base score of 17 for all psionic checks. In addition to the normal psionic powers held by the gerans, the high chieftain also has the sciences of *disintegrate* and *project force* and the devotions of *animate object* and *soften.* The high chieftain is guarded by a jarl, three thanes, and 15 other gerans. The high chieftain is also assisted by a precept that is treated as a normal geran with the additional psionic talent of *cell adjustment.* The precept serves as the tribal healer and advisor to the chieftain.

Ecology: Geran are miners and hunters relying on themselves for survival.

Geran mines usually are well guarded operations that seldom delve below 50′ into the ground. Geran are especially successful in mining various forms of gems. Gerans are frequently sought by traders and treasure hunters.

Notes From HQ

Clubs Are Aces, But Cyberware Is Good, Too

There are more than 80 official RPGA™ Network clubs

The clubs have between 10 and 140 members, and are scattered throughout the United States, Canada, France, England, Austria and Australia. Another club is forming in Germany.

Clubs provide a ready group of people to game with, social activities, an opportunity to make new friends, a chance to try new game systems, and often times a place to play.

Network clubs also can compete in the annual Decathlon, which is a combination of tournaments, writing contests, scenario design challenges, and other activities. Many of the submissions from the writing contests find their way into the POLYHEDRON® Newszine, and many of the tournaments are run at conventions throughout the world. Several of these tournaments are scheduled for the GEN CON®/ORIGINS™ Game Fair. For example, the winning tournament from the Decathlon in 1991 is ARC Fellowship's *Carnival of Heroes* for the MARVEL SUPER HEROES game. Another finalist, *The Death Pits of Natatiri,* for Torg, was The Valiant 13th Regiment's entry. And *One On Every Planet,* a high-scorer for the Midwest Masters, is the Benefit tournament.

At the end of the year the club that has scored the most points in the Decathlon competition walks away with bragging rights and a big trophy. The ARC Fellowship has won the Decathlon two years in a row. Can they do it again?

Current leaders in this year's Decathlon are: SAIGE, The Club, Kenneth & The Apocalypse, The Valiant 13th Regiment, Rathskeller Gamers, MGM Grand Gaming Association, Brisbane League of Adventurers, Cy Lons, and ARC Fellowship.

Next year's Decathlon will be expanded to include tournaments at more conventions, especially international gatherings.

Network clubs compete in special tournaments at conventions throughout the world. Notable victories have been won by the Adventurers Guild of Wright State University (GEN CON® Game Fair 1991); MGM Grand Gaming Association (WINTER FANTASY™ Convention 1992); and The NorEasters (ConnCon 1992). This year's club event at the GEN CON/ORIGINS Game Fair will test the best teams clubs can field.

If you are not a member of a club, but would like to join an existing one, see issue #69, or drop a postcard to HQ asking if there is a club in your area. Also, check the Newszine's Classifieds sections.

Be Kind To Char

Charmaine Snyder, our clerk, gets lots of phone calls from members wanting to know their points and levels.

Char works busily away at typing tournament results into our computer. In the midst of this a member will call and say, "I'm going to a convention in a few weeks and I need to know my level. I might be able to play in a Masters tournament."

For Char to check this member's points, which she was quick to do because she is a nice person, she has to completely back out of her tournament entry program, access another program, enter the member's number, pull up the member's level and point information, relay that information over the phone, back out of the member's data base, re-enter the tournament program, and go back to putting in points from tournaments. All of that takes quite a bit of time. It doesn't take many delays like this to cause a real problem.

When Char's drawer of convention tournaments began to overflow, she came to the conclusion that she would no longer answer point questions on the phone.

If you want an update of your points and levels, send your request in writing and include a stamped, self-addressed postcard or envelope. That way, when Char has finished inputting a convention's tournaments, she can check many people's points and levels all at once. It will save a lot of time and everyone will still get the information they want.

Contest Contest

We received many submissions for our Contest Contest. During the next several issues we will run the best entries, with the contest originator receiving a one year's membership extension and a TSR books trilogy.

This month's offering, created by member Alex Iwanow of New Jersey, is a cyberware design contest.

In a dark, cyberpunk future, you are the creative director of a megacorporation that produces cybernetic implants. However, intense competition has driven business into the ground. Unless you come up with a monumental idea for a new project, you will lose much more than your job.

Rules: Design an original product of cyberware for any game system. Examples include: Cyberpunk by R. Talsorian, Cyberspace by I.C.E., GURPS Cyberpunk by Steve Jackson Games, Shadowrun by FASA, Torg by West End Games, and 2300 A.D. by GDW. You are *not* limited to games that appear on this list. Use the same format for presenting the implant as the respective rulebook does.

Each entry must fit into one of the following categories. **1** Sensory Input: This incorporates all sensory implants. Examples include thermal vision, sound amplifier, taste processor, directional scent, tactile enhancement, and temperature sense. **2** Sensory Output/ Physiological: This includes implants such as limbs, internal organs, reflex boosters, voice modulators, and muscular/ skeletal systems. **3** Neurological: These implants involve the mind. Examples are brainwave transmitters, cyberdecks, weapon and tool hands, neural interfaces, armor, cyberbeasts, and painblockers. **4** Other: Things that just don't fit into one of the above categories.

All entries must be typed, double-spaced, and fit on one sheet of paper. Include your name, membership number, the game your cyberware fits, and the category. Each submission must be accompanied by a completed Standard Disclosure Form.

Entries must be postmarked by October 1, 1992.

Winning: Entries will be judged on completeness, originality, and playability. You may enter as many times as you wish, but each entry must have a separate disclosure form.

Winners will receive a one-year membership extension.

Take Care,

Jean

Ω

Letters

Complaints, Sour Grapes, And Pats On The Back

I think that Lawrence Hurley's ideas in issue #70 about having readers write their opinions about new (and old) products was great. Knowing what other players think about a game system would make the choice of what to buy much easier.

Also, you frequently ask readers to voice their opinions on what they like and dislike about the Newszine, so here's what I think. *Wolff and Byrd* is never enjoyable, and *Bloodmoose* is only slightly better. Other than that, most of the articles in the Newszine are fine. I especially enjoy reading the *Living Galaxy* (even though I do not play space RPGs). It is extremely well written and serves as an example of how one can integrate ideas into games.

I like *The Living City* not because I tie all of the articles together into one huge city campaign, but because I can easily enhance my own city adventures by adding a feature from *The Living City.* When viewed individually, they can become invaluable tools—like NPCs or monsters—that can be used as needed.

Into The Dark is another feature I enjoy reading. Although I do wish that occasionally new pictures would be reviewed as well. Also, I greatly enjoy the letters and contests.

Jeff Mills
Milltown, IN

Thanks for your thoughts, Jeff. We need to know what members think of the Newszine. We base the Newszine's content on the submissions we receive and the types of articles our readers enjoy.

We'll hold the polls open just a couple more months before we adjust our content based on reader response. So if there are features you like or dislike, get your responses in **soon.**

I am writing in response to Lincoln R.T. Morffi's letter, and to comments made in "Wither the Living City?" (Notes from HQ), both in issue #69.

I, for one, am not tired of *The Living City.* While certain articles, like *Chemcheaux,* are not to my taste (too farfetched/Monty Haulish), the majority are very entertaining and enjoyable. On the other hand, I also agree, in part, with the other view. There are far too many shops run by people who have high levels. But this does not usually bother me. I have my own solution.

Like Mr. Morffi, I am running a campaign world with true-history parallels and a quasi-medieval feeling. It is not the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting, but it is partially inspired by it. We have a sense of realism (not always gritty, though), and definite continuity.

What I do is split up and relocate these shops and their owners. While this may seem to some to detract from *The Living City,* if you aren't using the Realms setting, it doesn't matter.

For instance, in my current campaign, we are adventuring in the lowlands, an area of swamps and plains near the ocean, with three towns. Now, let's say in the town of Kelmsdale (medium size, near a forest and a **deep** swamp), I place *Oljagg's Rag* and Bottle Shop (issue #66) and Holly's Mill (#65). These two stores, along with one or two other shops of my own, and the normal 0-level proprietors of all the other businesses, adds up to a very interesting locale.

Or, in the larger coastal town of Dimmesburg, I might add to the gloomy, normal shops and establishments, The *Sigil of the Silent Night* (#67), *E.L.F. and Co.* (#61), *The Dancing Bear* (#60), *Black Dugal's Music Shoppe* (#56), and have *Professor Wu Ling* and his magic lantern (#64) visiting town. That would certainly spice things up.

So you see, a creative DM may use the different places detailed in the POLYHEDRON® Newszine in different villages, towns, hamlets, and metropolises throughout his world. Through this use, said DM can utilize what may have seemed like a waste of space in his favorite magazine.

One last thing: where on Earth (or Narnia or the Forgotten Realms) did you get that stupid comic *Bloodmoose?* I know Batton Lash is on leave, but please, come up with something better than that!

Dan Brown
Findlay, OH

Dan, many DMs selectively use bits and pieces of The Living City *in their non-FORGOTTEN REALMS setting campaigns. Even in Living City tournaments at the Game Fair and WINTER FANTASY™ Convention the authors use certain favorite businesses.*

Skip Williams has a few preferred shops that grace his campaign. And I alter a few things in some of the businesses and put them in various cities in my Star Wars campaign.

I think that's part of the attraction of the Living City entries. They're very versatile. Of course, we still want to hear from other readers about their views on the Living City.

As for Bloodmoose, *we get mixed reviews from our readers—although the-*

Continued on page 6

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majority of them are favorable. What does the rest of the Network think about Bloodmoose and Wolff and Byrd?

I have been a member of the RPGA™ Network since November of 1989, and I have watched, I am sorry to say, the steady decline of the quality of this organization since that time. I joined because I wanted to be involved in a gaming organization that promoted good gaming and sponsored quality conventions. I am sorry to report that I believe this is no longer true. Since I joined I have attended many conventions, both as player and as judge, including GEN CON® Game Fair in 1990 and 1991. During this time I have watched the steady decline in tournament quality until now I believe tournaments are not only nearly unreadable by GMs, but they offer no role playing potential what-so-ever, offering only hack-and-slash gaming that I attempted to get away from by joining the RPGA Network. Some of these tournaments include:

AD&D® game, *DemonTooth Tower*—not playtested at all, poorly written. I GM'd.

DARKSUN™ realm, *Enemy Of My Enemy*—no role playing at all. I GM'd.

FASA's Shadowrun, *Fear City*—little role playing, author had no knowledge of the rules whatsoever. I GM'd.

GDW's Merc 2000, (don't remember the title)—this was so hack and slash I stood up and left from my table at the GEN CON Game Fair. I played.

TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game, *Operation Snowball*—no playtesting, too long for one round, but finally a good plot. I GM'd.

GDW's Dark Conspiracy, (don't remember the title)—Ill prepared for the time, no playtesting. I played.

Also, at this time I am preparing to run two tournaments, both for an upcoming convention. They are *First Run*, which needed proofreading (like most of the modules I have received) and needs something besides "blast 'em all" gaming. And *Million NuYen Bounty*, which is almost worthy of being called a RPG adventure. But I have only skimmed through it.

Also, during this time I have watched my prices for joining go up, while I personally received no benefits, as I have, in my time as a member, received only six copies of the POLYHEDRON® Newszine, two of which were the introductory issue.

Also, I am dissatisfied in the fact that the RPGA Network and the POLYHEDRON Newszine only advocate playing TSR-produced games.

All of these elements combine to form one idea in my mind: to never renew my RPGA Network membership again, and to find a decent gaming organization (several exist that specialize in one game, the best I have seen being KA GE for Shadowrun). Unfortunately, I have a desire, or perhaps a perverse love of pain, to play in upper level RPGA Network sanctioned events at conventions, such as the Masters events (if I had ever been told my correct point totals in all my membership, I might be a master now. I don't know) in a hope that playing with higher level players will improve play. That is my reasoning for writing this letter, and perhaps some upcoming events. To better an organization that I think can still be saved. Please understand I am not saying that all tournaments released are bad, but all the ones I receive or play in seem to be. I saw a copy of *Blazing Saddles* for the AD&D® game by Mr. Alan Grimes of the RPGKC, that I thought would be quite fun.

Name and address witheld.

You say there has been a steady decline in quality of the organization since the fall of 1989. Well, we took a bi-monthly Newszine and made it monthly. We added a plethora of Regional Directors to help gamers locally. We started two international branches to increase Network participation worldwide. We started a Retailers Program, which benefits the members because they can get discounts at many local hobby shops. We improved our club program and currently have seven dozen Network clubs. We sanction tournaments for more game systems than ever before. We offer more contests. Decline in quality? We disagree.

The Network promotes good gaming. We're sorry you believe this isn't the case. True, not all tournaments are of equal quality. We get about 200 tournament submissions a year. Not all of them are sanctioned. Based on the volume of submissions, however, you can see that we do not have time to edit each accepted event into something of publishable quality. We more closely edit tournaments selected to run in the Newszine. Your opinion on the tournaments you mention above is just that—your opinion, and we won't argue over reviews. You also say you ran most of those tournaments. With work, a GM can turn a mediocre scenario into something terrific. Besides, if you don't like what you have been given to run, why not write and submit your own tournaments?

You complain that prices for membership have increased during the past few years. Postage costs more, printing prices have increased, and you get a monthly magazine instead of a bi-monthly one. You also say you have only received six issues of the Newszine. We must receive change-of-address notices from members when they move. We have said innumerable times that the U.S. post office does not forward bulk mail. The address in our data base does not match the one on your letter.

The RPGA™ Network advocates playing only TSR, Inc. games? Griffin hockey! Of the six tournaments you mention in your letter, three of them are non-TSR games, two of them are for the same TSR game, and one—the TOP SECRET/S.I.™ game—we no longer support for lack of scenarios and players. At this GEN CON®/ORIGINS™ Game Fair we are sponsoring scenarios for TSR, Inc.'s AD&D® game and GAMMA WORLD® game; West End Games' Torg, Star Wars and Paranoia; FASA's Shadowrun; GDW's Dark Conspiracy, MegaTraveller and Twilight 2000; 54°40' Orphyte's Timemaster; Palladium's Robotech; and Chaosium's Call of Cthulhu. Other conventions throughout the world offer Network tournaments featuring game systems by various companies. We sanction more AD&D game tournaments than anything, however—that's what the players seem to want. And don't forget the POLYHEDRON® Newszine. We publish articles on a variety of game systems.

You mention joining other organizations. Maybe KA GE is a great group; we're not familiar with it. However, please note we service a variety of games, not just one.

And as for your correct point total, it's listed on the sheet of paper that comes with every updated membership card you receive. You might not get your updated card, however, as sometimes these are mailed bulk—and the post office won't forward bulk mail. ❑

The Living City

The Ill Eagle Inn

by Christopher Earley

This hostelry, within a short walking distance to the docks, has a reputation for fine food and unusual conversation.

What sets it apart from other superior inns of the city is its unusual "attraction," an ugly talking eagle with an equally ugly opinion of the world.

The Inn's owner, Sorduel Meytauc, is an acid-tongued, yet mostly peaceable, human in his 40s. Meytauc is the former chef of the lord of Damara, Kidaez Tahlard. When that lord's elegant northern estate was overrun by the army of the Witch-king Zhengyi prior to the Bloodstone Wars (see the H-series of TSR AD&D® game modules), Sorduel was able to flee with a modest hoard of gold and a wagonload of the nobleman's possessions.

Among those possessions was a most rare creature, a gnarled eagle with the powers of speech. The eagle calls himself Toddle, and he professes a great hatred for all demi-humans.

The Inn

Sorduel Meytauc's skills as servant, cook, and host (along with the monetary booty from Tahlard's mansion) paved the way for the opening of the Ill Eagle Inn. However, the Damaran soon squandered a large quantity of his finances on setting up the business, and it became necessary to sell some of the more conspicuous baubles he had acquired, things easily recognized as "previously owned" merchandise. With the help of a letter of recommendation from his one-time accomplice in Heliogabalus, Sorduel found several underground contacts throughout the city and unloaded his former master's possessions one by one. He kept the eagle.

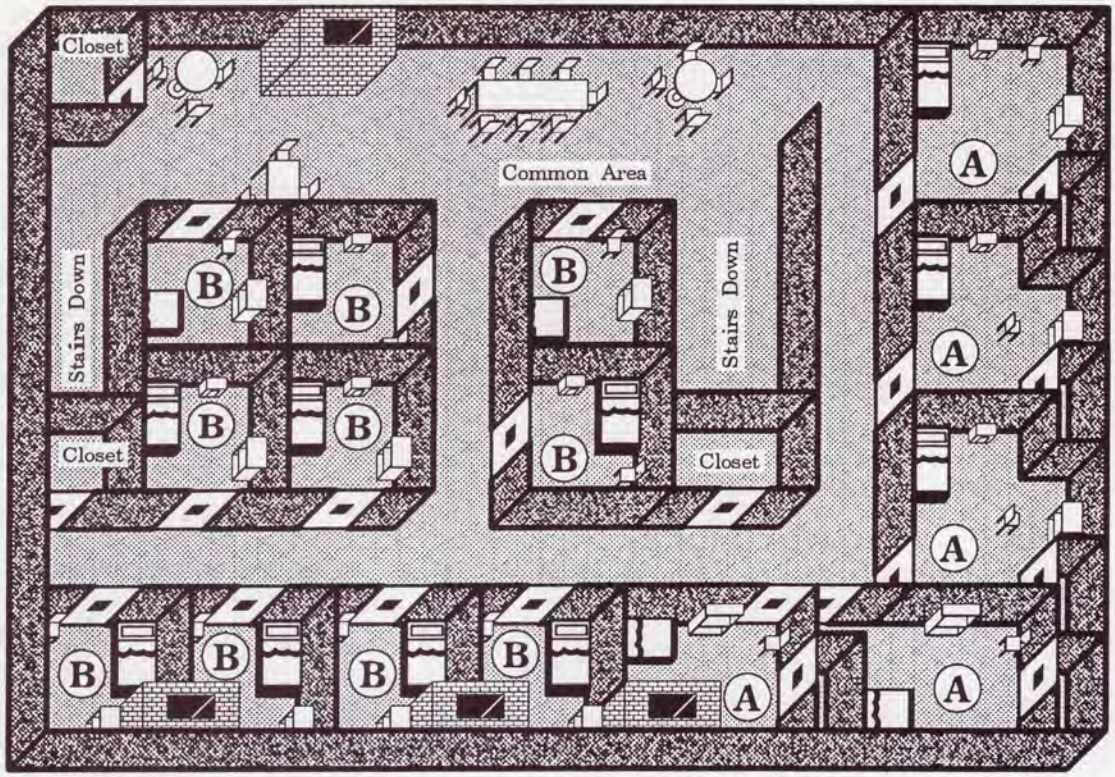
At prompting from Toddle, the innkeeper remained in touch with his "lower peers" (as the eagle referred to them). Through this association Sorduel has become the face behind a fairly lucrative fencing operation. With an agreement with the thieves guild, a secret chamber was constructed below the inn, one with access to common guild haunts in the immediate vicinity. As Toddle has pointed out, the Ill Eagle is now quite illegal.

During business hours, Toddle almost always can be found in his cage in the center of the common room. He lets himself out at night, as the cage is never locked. The raised platform on which his cage rests is a three-foot high, four-foot diameter circle of cobblestone that was once an indoor well before it dried up. One of the building's former owners filled it with gravel. Various dark green plants line the edges of the old well and drape down to obscure the stonework from sight, making it appear that Toddle's cage sits atop a mound of foliage.

The talking eagle is a fascinating novelty to passersby and an amusing distraction to regular patrons. Toddle usually starts ranting about the growing blight of half-elves in the community or lack of any full-fledged discriminatory laws against demi-humans in general. Often, he will make obscure disparaging remarks about an elf named Ripsky, though not even Sorduel knows about this person.

As one would assume, the inn is a humans-only establishment by default.

THE ILL EAGLE INN

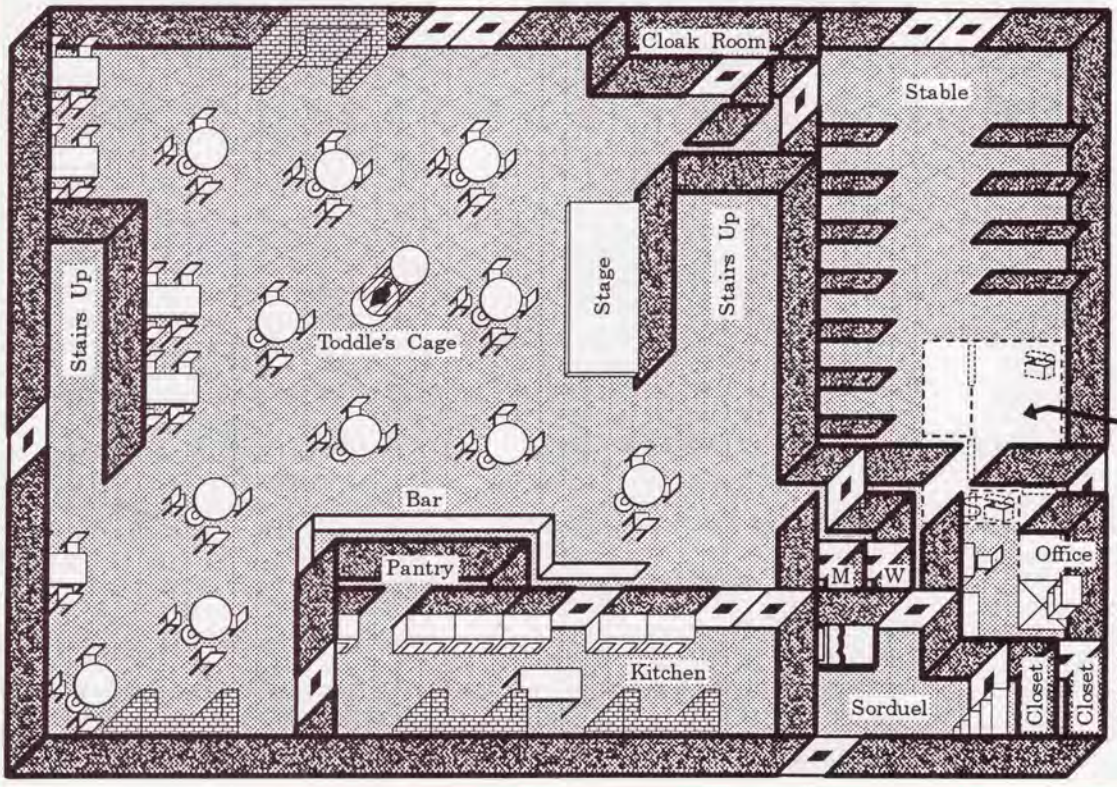


Second Floor

A High Cost Rooms

B Low Cost Rooms

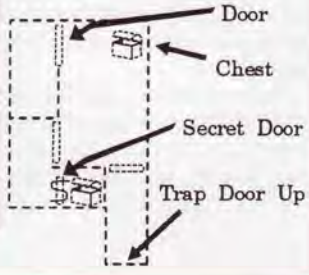
Equals Five Feet



Ground Floor

Trap Door in Floor of Office

Detail of Secret Basement Room



While Sorduel does not refuse to serve demi-human patrons (despite his own bigoted tendencies), few find they are able to comfortably digest a meal with a bird cursing at them and telling crude jokes about their heritage.

Beliefs and temper aside, Sorduel Meytauc runs a first-rate inn. Meals are very palatable, served in large portions and reasonably priced (see *Player's Handbook*, page 67, and improvise from there). The menu includes common and exotic examples of Damaran cuisine, prepared by chef Carlin Rendeg or Sorduel himself.

Lodgings, on the other hand, are more steeply priced, though none complain about the quality or service once the gold is spent. Most rooms cost 12 sp per day, or 10 gp per ride (a ten-day week). The better rooms available go for a tidy 2 gp per day, or 15 gp per ride, a hefty sum for bedding in the neighborhood. Any guests with mounts are charged an extra 6 sp each day for care and feeding of each animal.

Sorduel's rates are so high because the fence prefers a less-crowded inn. He does not like the idea of having too many people up and about after hours, the time he most often devotes to the pursuit of his profitable, shady hobby. For this reason, Toddle typically keeps an inconspicuous watch near the entrance to the secret chamber (beneath the office floor). At the first sign of trouble, be it a raid by the city patrols (which has yet to occur) or a much too curious guest (a common problem), Toddle squawks, "Ripsky had dung fer brains!" a prearranged signal warning those below to clear out immediately. The eagle then begins berating the guest until the guest is insulted and returns to his room.

The Eagle

Shortly after hatching, Toddle was given an increased intelligence and the ability to speak by a meddling, addle-brained wizard from the world of Oerth. The wizard Zebaakus met an untimely end while venturing into a region known as the Vast Swamp. The wizard's ersatz familiar, Toddle, soon fell into the warty hands of a Greater Servant of the demigod Wastri, the Hopping Prophet.

In his many years among the odd and bigoted worshipers of Wastri, Toddle gained his current inflammatory attitude toward demi-humans and also developed a distinctly toad-like appearance, as frequently befell followers of the demigod of bigotry.

One year, an elven adventurer, Kalesh Ripsky, single handedly turned the Greater Servant's hateful polystery upside down and stole the temple's eagle. Ripsky initially thought to train Toddle away from all prejudices, but found the task beyond him. While wandering in the Realms, Ripsky unloaded the misanthropic bird on an interested buyer, who later sold him to the estate where Sorduel worked.

Since Toddle spoke in a tongue inscrutable to sages and linguists of the Realms (the Oeridian language of Greyhawk), it was not until he picked up the Common tongue of Faerun that he could make his opinions and biases known properly.

Lord Tahlard was forced to hide the toad-featured eagle in the servant wing of the estate whenever important dignitaries came to visit—especially when demi-humans were known to be in their entourage.

Sorduel found that he shared many of Toddle's views and began to develop a liking for the eagle. When the wave of assaults came from Vaasa, he took his like-minded companion south, where they eventually settled in Ravens Bluff.

The Staff

Sorduel has an office and living quarters in the rear of the building's first floor. The inn's employees are mostly middle-class citizens and live elsewhere in the city, walking to work each morning. The exception is the stableboy, a 14-year-old orphan named Kam, who sleeps in the loft above the stable. Unknown to all, Kam has discovered Sorduel's fencing operation; he has kept quiet on the subject so far.

The following people also work at the Ill Eagle:

Tari Conric, waitress. Tari is a 19-year-old girl, plain looking but pleasant and shy.

Marda Conric, maid, Tari's 26-year-old sister. She is a smart, but unassuming woman who is protective of Tari. When the inn gets busy, Marda assists her sister in the common room.

Tib Krutler, bartender. Tib is a talkative, good-natured man in his mid-30s. Sorduel dislikes Tib but pretends otherwise for the sake of business—Tib is an excellent bartender and is well-liked by patrons. It was Tib who first shouted "Toddle watch yer tongue," a phrase regulars now cry out in unison whenever Toddle tells an especially tasteless joke. Tib insists on escorting the Conric sisters home each evening after the bar and kitchen are closed.

Alba Gantley, cook. A high-strung, rotund women approaching age 50, Alba is the more creative of the inn's two cooks. Originally from Waterdeep and still retaining her northern accent, Alba specializes in two things: seafood dishes and fights with her co-worker, Carlin.

Carlin Rendeg, cook. Born in the Sembian city of Yhaunn, Carlin is an accomplished chef with a greater base of knowledge, yet less natural flair in the culinary arts than his tormentor and co-worker, Alba. Carlin prepares all Damaran dishes, save when Sorduel is in the mood to "return to his roots." Carlin is mild tempered by nature, and Alba is one of the few people able to truly anger him.

A women named Stenda Hartly also helps the staff on a regular basis. She is Sorduel's mate of seven months (marriage plans are in the making). The daughter of a local tanner, she acts mostly as a supervisor but is not adverse to pitching in when things get hectic. She also handles any emergencies that might arise in the middle of the night and tends to the needs of guests at the inn once Marda has gone home. As proof of Sorduel's trust, he has told Stenda about his illegal dealings and revealed to her the secret chamber below the office. Initially, she tried to convince Sorduel to end his affiliation with the underworld, but she has since come to realize what percentage of the Meytauc wealth comes from the "lower peers," and has ceased arguing the point.

Fencing, Anyone?

Few who enter the Ill Eagle are aware of the criminal activities that take place under the premises. Further, Sorduel's fencing enterprise is not well known among the criminal element of Ravens Bluff. Thus, he maintains a lower level of illegal traffic than other fencing operations in the city.

Still, the quality of the goods involved is high, and Sorduel has built up a large base of funds once again. He has a respectable network of underground connections, which keep the news of his operation quiet. The innkeeper has been made an honorary member of the thieves guild, and in such circles he has garnered the reputation of being an "honest criminal."

Sorduel only accepts goods from persons the guild has okayed or whom respected local fences know to be reliable customers. He also accepts transactions from regular customers of his three best contacts in Selgaunt, Telflamm and Heliogabalus. These out-of-town customers must enter the inn under the pretense of ordering a meal. When the waitress asks what they would like, they ask if it would be possible to get a recommendation from the owner himself. When Sorduel arrives, the following exchange must take place:

Customer: *I hear the Ill Eagle serves an excellent rat soup.*

Sorduel: *I'm afraid that delicacy isn't in season just now.*

Customer: *Then I simply must have some.*

Sorduel: *Perhaps we can find something on the menu to meet your needs a bit more favorably.*

Sorduel exits the room, returning with a menu for the customer with the unusual craving. Scrawled on a note tucked inside is a message about returning at a particular time to "pick out a tasty rat."

Once the covert appointment has been made, it is up to the customer to decide whether to stay and order an actual meal. Most transactions take place in Sorduel's office, with quick access to the secret room. If a customer already knows of the chamber, business is carried out below. Access is via a trap door in the floor, atop which a heavy liquor cabinet sits. By depressing a concealed latch inside the cabinet, the bottom panels fall away and the heavy piece of furniture comes to rest upon a set of wheels formerly raised and hidden, thus making it easy to roll off the trap door. By tilting one side at a time and snapping the panels back into place, the cabinet can be made immobile again in three rounds, or two rounds if two people work together.

Sorduel has five trustworthy agents who keep him apprised of trends in other cities, and many carriers who can be trusted because of their affiliation to the thieves guild of Ravens Bluff. To cover the fees of everyone involved in the operation, customers must be prepared to pay 15 to 20 percent of the value of stolen goods they wish to sell.

Sorduel usually can tell a potential customer right away if there is a market for any particular stolen good, but sometimes he needs a ride or two (10 to 20 days) to find willing buyers.

Toddle the Talking Eagle

Host of the Inn

AC: 6
MV: 1, Fl 30
HD: 1+3
hp: 10
 # AT: 3
Dmg: 1-2/1-2/1-2
MR: Nil
INT: Very (see below)
AL: N (with evil tendencies)
SZ: M (6′ tall, 7′ wing span)

Special Abilities: speech, increased intelligence, dive attack, rarely surprised.
Languages: Common, Oeridian, empathy with toads
Possessions: brass cage, *ring of spell turning*

The wizard Zebaakus was an insane spellcaster who, in separate fits of rage, managed to kill off three familiars in the span of five years. As punishment, the powers that be prevented Zebaakus from gaining any more familiars in his lifetime. Not one to be so easily thwarted (and growing lonely in his own evil way), the mage bought an expensive eagle egg in a nearby city and tamed the emerging fledgling. By casting a permanent spell related to the more common *speak with animals* incantation, Zebaakus gave the bird the powers of speech in his own tongue, Oeridian. Unfortunately, the talkative young avian seemed more interested in explaining the freedom of flight or the taste of different kinds of rodents than in listening to his master's evil plots and laboratory experiments. To make up for this oversight, Zebaakus used a *wish* to increase the eagle's intellectual powers and give him a more human perspective.

When Toddle fell into the hands of the priest of Wastri, he was still young and easily influenced, despite his recently revamped intellect. Years in the polystery as the Greater Servant's personal pet and the temple's mascot had a brainwashing effect on the eagle (as well as slowly deforming him to his current toad-like stature), and Toddle has hated demihumans and the rest of society ever since.

Toddle has bulging eyes and sits hunched over with his tongue sticking out most of the time; he prefers to hop about rather than fly. His feathers are mottled and become slimy if he does not bathe every few days. The magic which altered Toddle has made him sterile as a side effect, a fortunate occurrence since no female eagle would ever consider mating with him.

From time to time, Toddle still likes to stretch his wings, but this is usually just to frighten his more mundane brethren. He typically takes flight only to find a few toads to spend some time with. Toddle has a special rapport with frogs and toads; he often decides to bring home several such "friends" during the night. In the morning, Sorduel or Stenda must convince him to return the creatures to their homes before the first guests wake up and see the warty amphibians hopping along the bar or down the staircase.

Toddle's own eating habits mirror humans', and he detests the idea of eating the "uncooked things" that his cousins prefer.

The *ring of spell turning* on his left talon was provided by the Greater Servant of Wastri after a spell caster decided Toddle would be an easy target and came close to roasting the bird. Toddle is still fluent in the Oeridian tongue. If angered (especially when in the presence of demi-humans), he reverts to his native language to repeat some of Wastri's most malicious chants—which have no equal in any other spoken or written languages in Faerun.

Sorduel Meytauc

2nd Level Male Human Fighter

STR: 14
INT: 14
WIS: 9
DEX: 12
CON: 13
CHA: 10

AC Normal: 8
AC Rear: 8
Hit Points: 13
Alignment: NE
Languages: Common, (Damaran dialect), Thieves Cant (some)
Age: 45
Height: 6′2″
Weight: 192
Hair/Eyes: Black/Green

Weapon Proficiencies: Short sword, sickle, dagger, knife.

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Forgery (12), cooking (14), etiquette (12), appraisal (14), read/write Common.

Continued on page 31

Secrets Best Kept Hidden

A Preview of the Forbidden Lore Boxed Set

by William W. Connors and Bruce Nesmith

When Tracy and Laura Hickman wrote the original RAVENLOFT™ setting module in 1983, they had no idea it would become the best selling and most beloved ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game module of all time. When the decision was made to spin an entire line off of this module, no one at TSR expected it to take off like it has. The RAVENLOFT line has acted like the land it depicts, drawing in people and capturing them with its eerie shadows and lurking horrors.

The *Forbidden Lore* boxed set, which will be available in hobby shops in November for $20, is intended to highlight many elements of the realm that needed to be addressed, expanded, or clarified. At numerous gaming conventions, we heard people telling us what they liked and didn't like about the RAVENLOFT setting. This product is dedicated, with our thanks, to all the folks who attend gaming conventions and tell us what we do right, what we do wrong, and what we forgot to do.

So, what have we put into the box? Quite a lot. The major component is a set of five books. In addition, there's a full color poster map, a deck of 54 Vistani fortune telling cards, and a set of five specially marked prophetic dice.

What are the books about? "Nova Arcanum," the first book, is a collection of expansions to the rules and guidelines presented for magical spells and characters in the RAVENLOFT game boxed set. It includes rules for using all the spells in *Tome of Magic* and some spells that we've pulled right out of the pages of Strahd Von Zarovich's secret books of necromancy.

The second book, "Oaths of Evil," gives expanded rules for handling curses and the dread powers checks that can turn even the best-intentioned warrior into a foul thing of the mists. As a finishing touch, it includes a number of cursed magic items and one very powerful, very evil artifact.

Third, we have "Dark Recesses." In this volume the rules for psionics presented in the *Complete Psionics Handbook* are translated into RAVENLOFT setting game terms, and special guidelines are presented for adventures that revolve around "psychic horror." Additionally, a much needed set of rules is given for the inclusion of DARK SUN™ world characters in RAVENLOFT adventures. We've added another domain, which has been pulled from the chaotic history of Athas.

Our fourth book is entitled "Cryptic Orders" and presents a number of secret societies and mysterious organizations that lurk in the corners of many domains. Some are mere dupes of evil powers, others are striving for purposes unknown, and one is good.

Lastly, we present "The Waking Dream." This book is an exploration of the Vistani tarokka (prophetic deck) and its uses in game sessions. This ties in to the deck of 54 cards, giving DMs a wonderful tool for the weaving of dramatic fortune telling sessions into their RAVENLOFT campaigns. A second method of divination, the Dikesha, is also explored. Coming from the temples and tombs of Har'Akir, this method of fortune telling uses five dice to catch a glimpse of the future.

To give the readers of the POLYHEDRON® Newszine an idea of what they can expect from *Forbidden Lore*, we've selected two sections that do a good job of conveying the material we have included in this box.

Powers Checks

(Excerpted from "Oaths of Evil"). There is a mysterious force, a lingering and majestic curse, behind the dread domains of Ravenloft. Sages speculate about its nature and try to assess its power. They ponder its earliest beginnings and question its ultimate ends. For all their theories and questions, for all their lore and history, for all their tireless efforts, they know nothing of the Dark Powers.

The actual game mechanics involved in making a powers check is presented in the original RAVENLOFT setting boxed set. It is simple and easy to use in a game session. There are, however, some subtleties that need to be addressed.

When to Make a Powers Check

For the purposes of a powers check, not all acts that might be defined as evil need be considered. For example, the act of killing is rightly classed as evil by most cultures, but the circumstances around the act must be weighed. Was it murder done in the heat of passion? Was the death accidental or caused by negligence? Was the act committed in self defense or in the pursuit of a greater good? In these cases, no powers check is made.

A powers check is made when a deliberate, calculated act of evil is done. The more foul the act, the more likely it is to draw the attention of the dark powers and cause them to reward/punish the person committing it.

Shades of Gray

Some other acts that don't seem overly evil might force a character to make a powers check as well. As with all things, this is subject to a DM's desires and interpretations.

Consider a group of heroes that come across a long abandoned temple in the midst of the foul swamps of Souragne. The temple is clearly unused, and has been for many decades, but it appears to have been dedicated to a good deity when it was in service. Perhaps the exploration of this temple would not be an evil act, but the removing of its treasures (especially if this caused the defiling of the temple) could well be.

There are two general guidelines for the resolution of such cultural or moral conflicts. The first assumes that an act is not evil unless the individual committing it sees it as such. Thus, a grave robber who saw no malice in his actions might not be subject to the scrutiny of the dark powers. The second consideration is that of the cultural norms of a given domain—an act is good or evil based upon how the local populace perceives it.

The decision of which guideline to follow is left to the individual DM. The former is good for forcing players to act in keeping with their roles and maintaining a feeling of conscience in the

game. The latter is better for presenting local taboos and superstitions in the context of a RAVENLOFT™ adventure.

Mitigating Circumstances

Another common exception to the requirements for powers checks are cases where the ends might justify the means. For example, an evil necromancer is about to transform a young woman into an undead ghoul. To rescue her, a band of heroes is forced to fight, and kill, several of the charmed guards that protect his keep. Killing these unwitting servants of evil might well be considered evil, especially if no attempt was made to subdue them or avoid fighting them. If there was no time left for such considerations, however, or the heroes were unaware that the guards had not willingly chosen to follow the necromancer's evil ways, then no check would be required.

If, on the other hand, a more difficult (but still viable) means of reaching the wizard was discarded because it was easier to slaughter his underlings, then a check is certainly called for. Such callous disregard for life has been the first step on many a ruinous journey.

It is important, then, that the DM not set the players up where they have no choice but to do evil. No one enjoys being put in a no-win situation, especially in something as personal as a role playing game. If the players are put in a position that requires them to take some action that might normally be considered evil, no powers check is made.

It is impossible to be forced or tricked into an evil act that merits a powers check. One of the most basic purposes of this game mechanic is to instill a fear of evil in the players. To be evil, in this sense, an act must be premeditated and undertaken with a full understanding of its vile nature.

PC or NPC?

An examination of the role of powers checks for various types of characters is in order.

For PCs, a powers check can be an important and dramatic part of the adventure. A character who has failed one or two checks is faced with the looming possibility of becoming something dark and sinister. If this happens, his character is lost, becoming an NPC. No doubt, such a player will be considering possible acts of redemption and certainly will refrain from anything that is remotely evil.

For NPCs, however, the main thrust of a powers check, that of promoting role playing, is lost. For this reason, it is advised that DMs use powers checks only for player characters. Randomness has no place in the life of an NPC; if he commits an evil act, the DM should simply decide if it warrants a powers check and whether that check fails. For the most part, however, DMs should simply ignore this aspect in the case of non-player characters.

There is, however, another way to use NPCs and powers checks in the game. By having an NPC who undergoes repeated powers check failures, the DM can illustrate the inherent dangers of evil. Nothing serves to drive a point like this home better than watching someone important to the party, like a valuable henchman, slowly decay into a creature of darkness. If, in the end, he turns on his master and former companions, the shock is complete.

Making the Check

The procedure by which a powers check is made is described in the RAVENLOFT setting boxed set. To summarize, the DM assigns a base percentage chance, determined by the malevolence of the evil act, and then a simple die roll is made against it. In general, this chance will be between 1% and 10%, but certain truly evil acts will draw more challenging rolls. If the roll exceeds the chance assigned, then the character has made his check, and the dark powers take no notice of him—this time. If, however, the roll is equal to or less than the chance defined by the DM, the character has been spotted by the dark powers and advances one step down the road to destruction.

The Value of Evil

One of the comments we hear most about powers checks at conventions and the like is that some DMs have a hard time assigning a value to the powers check. To be sure, the difference between 1% and 10% is subtle, and in game terms the risk of failure is often minor. Still, even a 1% chance will catch up with an evil character eventually, and a 10% chance ought to be enough to worry even the most callous of sinister people.

To aid the DM, we've put together a list of various evil acts and assigned them a numeric value between one and 10, indicating the chances that are associated with such a deed. These are, of course, just guidelines. Anyone who commits the act with unusual cruelty or is especially malicious will find his chances of failure increased by one or two points.

A number of categories and terms are used in the presentation of this hierarchy of evil. Let's take a few moments to define and clarify them.

Crimes or Acts of Violence

Here are some general categories of violent acts.

Assault, Unprovoked: An unprovoked assault is any attack upon another person that is done out of malice or spite. This includes minor physical violence like beatings or brawls and some violent crimes (mugging, for instance). It assumes that the victim is not permanently harmed by the attack and will recover in time. This is the sort of thing that marks a bully.

Assault, Grievous: This is more brutal and assumes that some lasting harm has been done to the victim. It includes many of the more severe violent crimes like attempted murder.

Betrayal, Major: This implies the betrayal of a person's trust or taking actions that are against their best interest. Major betrayal includes such vile deeds as luring someone to a vampire's lair in exchange for the fiend's promise that no harm will come to betrayer or his family. In general, if it leads to someone's harm or death, it's major betrayal.

Betrayal, Minor: Although less severe, actions of this type cannot be discounted. Deeds that lead to embarrassment or a change in lifestyle fall into this category.

Extortion: This covers areas such as blackmail and similar acts where the threat of physical violence or loss is used to force someone else to perform an undesirable task, violate a law, or refrain from reporting a criminal or violent act.

Lying: This covers all manner of intentional deceit, even the simple omission of facts. However, unless the lie has some direct negative effect on the person hearing (and believing) it, no powers check is made. This is, all things considered, a very minor indiscretion in the darkness that is Ravenloft.

Murder, Brutal: To qualify as brutal, a murder must cause undue suffering or horror on the part of the victim. Often, this is a very fine judgment call. For example, poisoning someone would not normally be considered. However, if the toxin caused great pain and suffering before it brought death, the DM might decide that it counted.

Murder, Premeditated: This includes any killing that is done in the name of personal gain and vengeance so long as the victim is simply done away with and not made to suffer.

Theft, Grave Robbing: This type of theft is so unusual in most cultures that it merits inclusion as its own category. As a rule, it includes the looting of fallen bodies in war or the removal of any treasure from a place of burial. It also includes acts like slipping a ring from the finger of dead woman just before she is placed in her coffin. In some cultures, this crime is far worse. In Har'Akir, for example, grave robbing might fall under the category of desecrating a holy place.

Theft, Major: This covers any type of theft that results in great personal hardship for the victim.

Theft, Minor: Any crime that does not fall into the previous category, like picking a pocket or cutting a purse, is placed under this heading.

Threat of Violence: This is a fairly minor offense that generally involves any threatening gesture or statement that causes another individual to fear for his well being. Thus, it does not include mundane threats like those made by a drill sergeant or member of the watch attempting to extract information from a reluctant prisoner. By the same token, warnings to refrain from some course of action ("Don't move your hands, necromancer, or I'll kill you!") don't count.

Torture, Routine: Almost without a doubt, this is among the most heinous and evil things that one person can do to another. This type of torture includes all such acts that might seem to be for a purpose. Torturing a prisoner to learn who his master is, for instance. Even in the best of circumstances, this is a thoroughly reprehensible act.

Torture, Sadistic: This vile category includes all manner of tortures inflicted for the simple joy of causing pain. It is so evil an act that every example of it fairly begs for the attention of the dark powers.

Unholy Acts:

These are deeds done against a church or other religious body. It is especially important to those who are making use of the *Complete Priest's Handbook* or to groups of adventurers that include paladins or priests.

Breaking a Tenet: All faiths have normal rules and regulations that their followers are expected obey. For example, a harvest deity might require that 10% of all harvests be burned in homage to his help in growing the crop. If a follower of the deity intentionally sacrifices less than his full share, he has violated one of his faith's tenets. Generally, these transgressions are minor and don't require a powers check unless done repeatedly or with malicious intent.

Breaking an Oath: This is a more serious violation. It requires that the act be in violation of some promise made under the auspices of the church. For example, a cleric who has sworn never to use an edged weapon finds himself in mortal combat with an evil creature. Instead of using his own mace, he picks up the magical *flame tongue blade* of a fallen comrade and cuts the beast down. His reasons might seem fairly rational; he might have felt that it would take too long to kill the monster with his own weapon. His oath, however, requires him to always forsake blades and their kin.

Breaking a Vow: This is the most serious violation that one can commit against a deity. Like the two failings described above, it governs transgressions against one's promises made under the auspices of the deity. In this case, the act is so great that it flies in the face of everything the faith stands for and violates a duty to the ultimate power, not just to the church and its agents. For example, a paladin who betrays the trust of his church and watches as one of its temples is sacked might well find himself in this level of jeopardy.

Desecration: This is a broad category that covers any manner of destruction or defilement of sacred places or objects. Thus, it might include anything from the destruction of an important holy symbol to the doing of evil in a temple of good. For an act to qualify as desecration, the object or place must be made offensive to the deity, so that any blessings he has bestowed upon it are withdrawn.

Other Evil Acts

Of course, this list does not begin to include every conceivable act of evil that a person might do. Still, it does provide a broad overview of the various levels of powers checks and the types of deeds that they are intended to punish. There are countless other actions that might require characters to make a powers check, two of the more common ones are presented here.

Casting an Evil Spell: In both the RAVENLOFT™ setting boxed set and the "Nova Arcanum" book in this collection, variants on traditional AD&D® game spells are presented. In many cases, spells are also marked to indicate that their use requires the caster to make a powers check. When this is done, the chance is equal to 1% per level of the spell employed. Thus, the use of an *energy drain* spell requires a 9% check and the casting of *chill touch* a 1% check.

Laying a Curse: The first part of this book dealt with the creation and use of curses. In that section, it was written that anyone using a curse must make a powers check. The chance of failure is 2% for an embarrassing curse, with an additional 2% being added for each level beyond embarrassing. Thus, a lethal curse requires a 10% powers check.

Acts of Ultimate Darkness

In some cases, a character will commit an act so vile that a powers check seems to be too minor an award. These undertakings are termed acts of ultimate darkness and have a much greater chance of drawing the attention of Ravenloft's dark powers. What sort of things fall into this category? A perfect example would be Strahd's murder of his own brother in an attempt to possess his wife. This crime involved the betrayal and murder of his own kin, the driving of a beautiful and innocent woman to suicide, and the making of vows to forces darker than any man was ever meant to treat with.

When a PC commits an act of ultimate darkness the DM is free to assign any chance of failure to the powers check, be it 25%, 50%, or even 100%. In the latter case, the DM has seen a player attempt an action so vile that he cannot help but punish it. When this happens, automatic failure of a powers check is a perfectly acceptable response. ❑

The Everwinking Eye

Words To The Wise

by Ed Greenwood

"How else can we touch each other, down the passing years, save by words?"
Laeral of the Nine,
Thoughts On Life And Wizardry
Year of the Snow Winds

Elminster bid me pause in our guided tour of the Realms while he cleared up a few terms of speech. So here's a look at:

Language Lore

A Tiny (But Hopefully Handy) Glossary of Phrases, Sayings, and Words of the Realms.

The words we delve into here should prove useful for DMs and players alike seeking to spice their characters' speech with the flavor of the Realms.

Greetings & Farewells The shaded box on page 9 of the Cyclopedia of the Realms book (in the original FORGOTTEN REALMS® boxed campaign set) contains salutations and partings widely known among folk of various places and races in Faerun. In addition to the words and phrases there, know ye these:

AlaE (ah-LAY: "Fortunate meeting," a contraction of an old elven phrase of the same meaning)—a greeting (and reassurance of peaceful intentions) between travelers in the southern and eastern coastlands around The Sea of Fallen Stars.

Durgos (DUR-ghosz: "Peace")—a corruption of the orcs' **durgreos** (see below), used by mongrelmen and some human slavers.

Durgreos (Dur-GREE-ohzz: "No quarrel")—a responsive greeting and parting used by orcs of the north.

Hykyath (Hik-ah-YATH: "Prance!")—a parting used by satyrs. It has been picked up by some poets among the elves and half elves, and even orcs have been heard, in battle, derisively telling their foes and underlings to "look lively" in the few breaths left before they die.

Lammath Drios (Lham-math DREE-ohs: "Fortune find you")—a parting used in Essembra and in the countryside south of it as far as the seacoast, and west as far as the Thunder Peaks. It is not favored within the proud cities of Sembia, where only "bumpkins" and "country dung-carters" are thought to speak so.

Rhambukkya (Ram-BOOkh-yah: "Ride high")—used as both greeting and parting by the nomads of the Shaar.

Sabbas (Sab-BAS: "Run free")—a parting used by centaurs.

Stettar Voh (Stet-tar VOE-hh: "Gods-power [keep you] well")—formal, peaceful greeting and parting among merchants in The Shining South.

Tantam (TAN-tam: "Hello")—peaceful way-greeting among merchants of the north.

Uluvathae (Oo-loo-VAW-thay: "[May your] fortune bring you joy")—a friendly, informal greeting and parting used by elves and half-elves to others (of any race) they welcome the company of. Between close friends, its use is an insult, or a neutral "say-nothing-we're-being-listened-to" warning.

Vlandranna (Vlan-DRANNA: "Gods grant [approval, or that what is spoken of occurs by their will])—an old, corrupted dwarven word from the region that is today the Vast and Impiltur; now used by all trading races in The Sea of Fallen Stars.

Other Terms

In the Realms, "Power," capitalized, means "divine magical powers."

Where we would say "a moment or two," most humans in the Realms say "a breath or two"—and what we would call a minute is "a goodly breath or three."

Dwarves tend to call the same span of time (actually, anything up to about three minutes) "but a little while," whereas a halfling would call the same span of time "a long song." To a halfling, a minute is "a tune," and 10 minutes is "three long songs." Most halflings tend to speak of longer time periods, within a day, in terms of how much the sun has progressed.

The Written Word

Published Realms products contain little heraldry and runic script, but enough "bare-bones" linguistic notes to address most writing and DMing needs. The "Cyclopedia of the Realms" book in the original Realms set contains (on page 7) the styles of names used by folk of various races and professions (consider this generalized information to be superseded by later, contradictory but more specific notes and details in other Realms sourcebook products). Further, alphabets are found in the "Cyclopedia," page 8, and languages on pages 8-9.

A more detailed delving into dwarven names, Dethek runes, and runestones can be found on the covers of *FR11/ Dwarves Deep.* Inside the module, on pages 11 and 12, is a selected glossary of dwarven words and lists of clan names.

In like manner, chapters 9 and 10 of *FOR2/The Drow of the Underdark* explore drow names and words. The forthcoming *Menzoberranzan* boxed set expands drow lingo a little more—for readers willing to pick information out of text dealing with other topics. *FR13/ Anauroch* does the same for the human Bedine desert nomads.

Place Nomenclature

Largely derived from human speech, these terms have become widely used by all trading races in the Realms.

In this list, look up the place on the left. After the colon appears the term that applies, so that one can write "Amnian wine" instead of "wine of Amn."

Amn:	Amnian
Anauroch:	Anaurian
Arabel:	Arabellan
Athkatla:	Athkatlan
Baldur's Gate:	Baldurian

(Never "Balduran," which is the name of the city's founder. To misuse his name is to insult his memory and the city.)

Berdusk:	Berduskan
Calaunt:	Calauntan

(Not "Calauntian" or "Calaunan." "Calaunthead" is a deliberate outlander's insult heard often among Inner Sea sailors).

Citadel Adbar: Adbarrim
Citadel of the Raven: Ravenar
(A citizen; garrison soldiers are referred to as "Citadel-helms," or, less politely, as "stone-heads.")
Cormyr: Cormyrean or: Cormyrian
("Cormyte," a more slang, familiar term, is also used, and is favored by the current monarch, Azoun IV.)
Daerlun: Daerlunian
Elturel: Elturian
(Not "Elturelian.")
Elversult: Elversian
(Not "Elversultian," which is much used in Calimshan, and considered an insult by Elversians.)
Eveningstar: Evenor
(An archaic, little-used, formal term.)
Faerun: Faerunian
Gond: Gondryr
(Not "Gondian," although this old term is sometimes applied to temples, vestments, and other items.)
Hillsfar: Hillfarian
(The old, scholarly term "Helvar" is also sometimes heard.)
Immersea: Immersean
("Immerian" is also sometimes heard, but is frowned on locally, because it was used in the past to refer to smugglers, slavers, and pirates.)
Iriaebor: Iriaeben or Iriaeban
Lantan: Lantanna
Luskan: Luskar
Marsember: Marsembian
("Marsemban" is also correct, but rarer.)
Melvaunt: Melvauntian
Mintarn: Tarnian
(Never "Mintarnian.")
Mulmaster: Mulmasterite or Mulman
(The former term applies to people, the latter to things.)
Myth Drannor: Myth Drannan
Neverwinter: Neveren or Neverwintian
(The second term is rarely heard outside of poetry, pedantic peech, or among the arrogant Calishites.)
Nimbral: Nimbran or Nimbrian
(Either is correct; the former is usually applied to beings, and the latter to things, but not always.)
Ordulin: Ordulian or Ordulan
(The rarely-heard second term applies to goods, companies, animals, and items, but never to people.)
Procampur: Procampan
Ruathym: Ruathen
Saerloon: Saerloonian or Saerlunan
(The second, older term is heard less often.)
Scornubel: Scornubian or Scornubrian
(Both are correct, but the second term is little used.)
Selgaunt: Selgauntan or Selgite
(The second term applies only to art and workmanship.)
Sembia: Sembite or Semmite
(Either term, applied to the citizens, is correct, the former is used most often in the north and in the Dragonreach lands, the latter used more in the south. One speaks of a chair or sword of "Sembian" make, but of "Semban" habits, beliefs, or style of workmanship. Outlanders often call citizens of Sembia "Sembians," and the citizens usually don't bother to correct them.)
Shadowdale: Dalefolk
(Like all other Dale-dwellers; they use no other term; in Sembia, Westgate, and the Vilhon Reach, where folk of the Dales are thought of as backwards bumpkins, the term "Daler" is sometimes heard; it corresponds to "dung-carter" or "hayseed.")
Sossal: Sossrim or Sossar
(Use the first term for beings, and the second for items.)
Suzail: Suzailan
Tantras: Tantran
Tashluta: Tashlutar
(The term "Tashalar" refers to the surrounding coastlands, subject to the rule of Tashluta.)
Thay: Thayan
Tilverton: Tilverian
(Never "Tilvertonian;" locals refer to themselves as "Gap folk," and will say, "I'm from the Gap.")
Urmlaspyr: Urmlassan
(Not "Urmlaspian," although snobs from Selgaunt use this term, which is resented in Urmlaspyr.)
Waterdeep: Waterdhavian
Westgate: Westhavian or Westar
Yhaunn: Yhauntan
(Not "Yhauntian.")
Zhentil Keep: Zhent or Zhentish
(The former term applies to a being [plural: "Zhents"], the latter to work or goods produced by those citizens. The archaic term [used today mainly for artifacts and other olden-work] is "Zhentarian." The term "Zhentilar" refers only to Zhentil Keep's soldiers, and the term "Zhentarim" only to the mages, priests, and agents of the evil organization that currently controls Zhentil Keep).

Racial Nomenclature

This section collects a few widely used terms for intelligent races of the Realms. The names in parentheses refer to those who usually use such terms. If no parentheses appear, assume that the name is in general use (certainly among surface-dwelling humans and merchant folk of all races).

Drow: the Dark Elves, The Accursed (other elves).

Dwarves: the Stout Folk.

Elves: the Fair Folk, the People (elves, of themselves, collectively).

Gnomes: the Quiet Folk.

Halflings: the Quick Folk, the Sly Folk (humans and dwarves).

Humans: the Manyhanded (halflings, elves; a.k.a "The Manyhanded Curse"), Brittle Bones (orcs), Oroosh (= "never-stopping talkers;" treants), Hurbryn (= "heavy-footed ones;" brownies, halflings, korred, satyrs).

Korred: the Dancing Folk.

Ogres: Beast-Men.

Orcs: the Mighty (orcs, of themselves), Slaugh (= "pigs" among some elves; this term literally translates as "mud-wallowing-dogs," and is beginning to be heard in use by half-elves, dryads, and some other forest-dwelling folk).

Satyrs: the Free Folk.

Svirfneblin "deep gnomes": the Deep Folk.

Collective terms most widely encountered are:

Meat = all intelligent prey (orcs).

The Proud Peoples = dwarves and elves collectively (humans).

Ugrukh ("broken bones") = wounded, defeated, slaves or those too weak to defend themselves or to be worthy of attention [used of all creatures](orcs).

Worms = lesser goblinkin (orcs).

❑

by Tom Prusa

Experience Preferred

Part Three
An AD&D® 2nd Edition Game Scenario
For Six Veteran Adventurers

Illustration by Gary M. Williams

DM Background

In this, the final chapter of *Experience Preferred,* our heroes must make their way to the demi-plane of Kansas, find Exeter, and bring him back home. Unfortunately, the detours they have been forced to take have given Exeter enough time to organize a party of his own and escape. This adventure works best with the player characters presented in issue #72.

While on the demi-plane of Kansas, there are no modifications to spells or magic items. However, Wemick does not have his spell books and cannot relearn spells. Also note that the potions Matilda carries are old and might not be effective. For purposes of this adventure, assume the *healing* potions always work, the others are still potent on a roll of 51-00.

Players' Background

"Well youngster, you see that youth is no substitute for experience," said the old man, as he leaned back to sip his wine. "Yes, elder," replied the young bard. "But what finally happened? After all, they traveled through Olympus, recovered an arrow for Hermes, fought a medusa, and rescued a dryad. Then they went to some strange alternate plane where they found huge ogres, strange performing elves, and hostile plants. They found Wemick's double and passed his tests. They even fought a dragon. But did they ever find Exeter?"

"Patience young man. I'm just getting to that part. After our heroes' adventures on Quorsit, they stood before the Gate of Worlds, with Wemick doing his best to concentrate on the demi-plane of Kansas, a memory 50 years old. Finally his face brightened, and he shouted "that's it!" The party saw a cold, bleak landscape. The gate entered the plane on a hillside, with a tower at the base of the hill, 300 yards away. Farther down, a gorge cut across the valley, with a wooden bridge crossing it. Upon the opposite hill was a cave with two glowing pillars.

"There was a group of men crossing the bridge, and at least one giant-sized figure. With a look of determination, the experienced adventurers stepped through the gate.

Kansas, At Last

As you enter the demi-plane of Kansas, you see six figures climbing the hill toward two glowing pillars. One is a giant, one a dwarf, and the others are human. The one in the lead is Exeter! After they cross the bridge, Exeter turns. He holds a sheet of parchment in one hand and gestures with the other. The bridge explodes in flames. Exeter and his entourage stride quickly up the hill, stopping before the gate. Exeter whirls, and through some acoustic trick of this plane you can hear him clearly.

"Wemick, you old fool. Don't you know by now that you won't stop me? I'm better than you, I've always been better than you!"

The party cannot get close enough to hit Exeter with spells or missiles before he and his group escape through the gate.

The Burned Bridge

When the party reaches the bottom of the hill, they stand in front of a gorge which cuts across the entire valley. Mountains ring the valley, and the party must cross the gorge to reach the other gate. The gorge descends straight for nearly 1,000 feet. It is 60′ across. The bridge has been reduced to two smoldering bridge supports, one on each side of the gorge.

There are several ways the party can get across—most likely Wemick or Henry will use a spell or two.

The party can use the bridge (the fire and destruction of the bridge are part of a *veil* spell Exeter cast from a scroll). The *veiled* area looks and feels like a destroyed, smoking bridge, but does not smell like one (only PCs who specifically ask about the smell will notice this). The *veil's* duration will expire 12 turns after the party reaches the gorge, revealing an intact bridge.

If someone attempts to lasso the supports on the other side, there is a 50% chance the rope will strike part of the "invisible" bridge. The rope appears to have been knocked aside. (Anyone who makes a disbelieve attempt after seeing this gets a +2 bonus, +4 if the character also noticed the smell.) If the lasso is not deflected, the PCs must hit AC 0 to successfully lasso the beams. Once the lasso is in place, the PCs can cross hand over hand; they'll think they're swinging over the 1,000-foot chasm, but in fact they're only a few feet above the bridge's walkway. A character must make a Strength check at a −2 penalty to cross on the rope. If the check fails, the character falls about two feet to the walkway. This does not dispel the *veil,* but the character automatically is entitled to a disbelieve attempt at +3. If the disbelieve attempt fails, the unfortunate character suffers 20d6 points of damage—all experienced adventurers know about the maximum falling damage rule (see PHB, page 104).

After the PCs cross the bridge, they can use the gate. They are *teleported* to a cave southwest of the home.

On the Road Again

The delay in crossing the bridge was just enough to give Exeter time for a clean getaway. Everybody can see fresh horse tracks and giant footprints leading out of the cave and toward the main road to the northeast. You guess the home must be about two day's travel on foot, maybe half that by horseback. It seems that Exeter and his group have a good lead. The village of Murrows Dell is about five miles down the road. Perhaps you will be able to find mounts there.

Murrow's Dell

This small hamlet is barely a wide spot in the road. There is a tavern and a blacksmith shop with a stable attached. The village is not detailed, since the party will not be spending any great amount of time there. A few of the key NPCs who the party might deal with are listed below:

Harold (tavern keeper): This big burly man is always ready to greet travelers. His ale is drinkable (barely), and the food is good. His prices are extremely high, but he knows he is the only game in town. At this time of the day the tavern is virtually empty; there are only a few old farmers nursing mugs of ale.

Blake (blacksmith): Blake also owns the stable. Blake is a huge man, the typical picture of a smith, but he has a surprisingly high falsetto voice. He offers to sell the party three horses and two mules, and only a clear cut opportunity for a large profit will cause him to part with more animals. His current stock and asking prices include:

Three medium horses. These horses are in good condition and are capable of carrying armored characters. They are not battle trained. Blake's initial asking price is 100 gp each. These are the horses he wishes to sell to the party. He will not sell them for less than 80 gp.

Two light horses. These are horses Blake wants to train for his sons. They are worth 25 gp each, but he will not let them go until the party offers at least 60 gp each.

Two mules. These are only average mules. They cost 20 gp each. If Sagrais is to ride, he must have one of these—he is too short to ride anything else.

Saddles and harness can be had from Blake for 15 gp per set.

Hornick (bully): This small-minded man is the leader of a local gang of young toughs. They are smart enough not to bother any of the residents. In spite of the PCs' armor and weapons, Hornick sees them as old, infirm, and easy pickings. Before the party leaves town, he leads his group of toughs onto the street and demands a "fee" from the PCs for using the streets. He makes rude remarks about the characters' age and acts obnoxious. If the party soundly thrashes the toughs, several local residents (mostly little old ladies) cheer loudly.

Toughs (8): Int Low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1; hp 6 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SZ M; ML 11; XP 15 each.

Hornick: Int Low; AL CE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 2 (F2); hp 14; THAC0 18; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA +1 "to hit and damage for 17 strength; SZ M; ML 11; XP 35.

Big-Mouthed Merchant

As the party rides northeast, remember that they will have to travel at the speed of the mule Sagrais is riding. The PCs continue to lose ground to Exeter's party.

After riding along for about three hours, you spy a wagon approaching. There is an immensely fat man driving the wagon, which is piled high with boxes and barrels. The man waves as you approach, and he pulls his wagon to a stop with every sign that he expects you to stop.

The merchant is Formil, a dealer in spices, foodstuffs, and tobacco. This

fellow never passes up the chance for a sale. If the party asks for information about Exeter, Formil says he saw a group ride past some hours ago. They were riding fast and didn't even stop to say hello, though they did stop a ways down the road to meet with a group of mercenaries.

It is near noon now, and Formil will offer to let the party eat with him. He persistently tries to sell spices (he has a surplus of cinnamon), dried beef, and tobacco. He will offer tobacco to each of the men, being most persistent with Henry, Wemick, and Sagrais.

If the party tries to ride by, remind Sagrais that it is near lunch time.

The Murdered Peasants

Several hours later you see two figures standing on the road. A few more figures lie next to them. As you draw closer you see that the standing figures are two young peasant boys, who begin to cry. Investigation reveals that their parents are lying on the ground, one of them clawed to death, the other with a broken neck.

The boys, Anderus and Philey, are unhurt, but devastated. They are trying to be brave, but the death of their parents has left them in near shock. It is obvious to the PCs that these children will perish if left alone.

If the PCs carry the boys on the two largest horses, they party will not slow down, as the mount Sagrais is riding still is the slowest.

If questioned, the boys say their family was going to town when they were overtaken by a group of men and a giant. The giant killed the father, and one of the men turned into a monster and clawed the mother. The boys are too miserable and frightened to describe the monster (it was Chillclaw, the gelugon), though they do remember that the giant had white skin and that the monster was white, too, and almost as tall as the giant. The boys paid no attention to the men.

Some time after finding the boys, the PCs will have to stop for the night.

Home At Last

The PCs reach the home before noon the next day. If they didn't push themselves into a forced march the previous night, they feel ready for anything.

It has been a long hard ride, but finally you draw near your home. As you crest the last hill, you see that the home still stands. A pale, ivory-haired giant stands on the front steps. He sees you and bellows something to someone inside. Exeter comes outside a moment later. The giant is holding Nellie in his hands, prepared to break her neck if you attack.

Exeter's Plan: Exeter wishes to prove once and for all that he is better at everything than Wemick. He has created a set of 12 gems, and six of them are planted about the home. When their counterparts (held by him and his allies) are brought together, the home will be destroyed by an earthquake. But destroying the home is not enough. Exeter wants to destroy Wemick first, defeating him in view of all the residents. Each member of this group will face one of the player characters in a combat to the death. If four or more player characters can win their duels, they can save the home. If not, everyone will perish.

The situation: In addition to his party from the plane of Kansas, Exeter has picked up a group of mercenaries; these were the men Formil the merchant saw. The mercenaries currently are holding the residents captive. For the duels, the residents will be forced to sit and watch, most with a guard right behind them. Any attempt to free the residents will cause many deaths. The only way to rescue the home is to meet Exeter on his own terms and defeat him. If the party takes a few minutes to look around, they'll see the stands around the practice field packed with nervous residents and grim-faced mercenaries. Attempts to do anything but look will result in Nellie's immediate death, followed by the slaying of all the residents and the destruction of the home.

The Challenge

As you approach the home, Exeter is waiting on the steps. "Well if it isn't the company of the duck. I thought that you'd never get here. We're all ready for you." He holds up an amethyst. "You see this stone? Well, there are five more like it in the hands of my associates. If any three of them touch, there will be an earthquake that will wipe out this place. If you want to save this hovel, you will have to defeat me and my allies. To make it simple, we will fight a series of duels. If you can win more than half of the duels, you can save the home. Well, do you accept the challenge, or will you go blindly to your deaths like the sheep you are?"

If the challenge is accepted (what self-respecting adventurer could refuse?), the PCs are led to the training ground, where most of the other residents are already being held. The giant tosses Nellie into the stands, where a pair of mercenaries watch her closely. There are dozens of mercenaries with swords drawn, all watching the residents.

Mercenaries (50): Int Average; AL LE; AC 7; MV 12; HD 1 (F1); hp 6 each; THAC0 20; #AT 1; Dmg 1-8; SZ M; ML 10; XP 15 each.

Duel Layout: The training ground is 150 feet by 50 feet wide. There are seats all around. Exeter will place a gem on a pedestal in the middle of the field. The first character to reach it and return to the starting gate will be considered the winner of the duel.

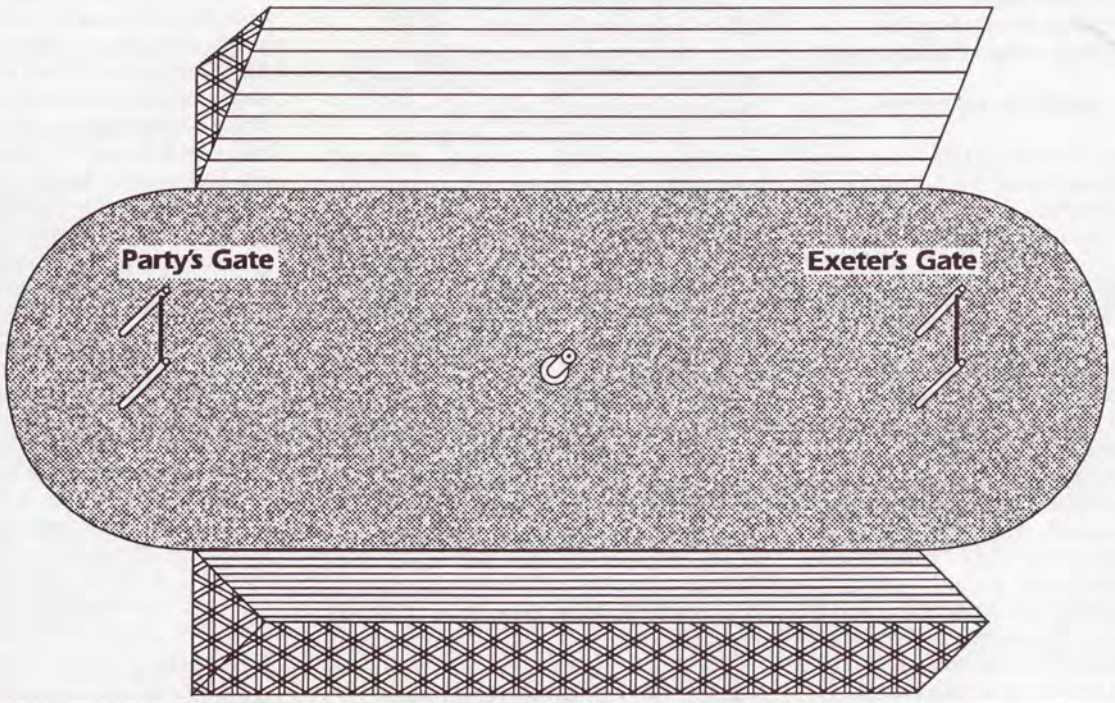
The Gems: The gems are large amethysts. Destroying a gem is just as good as winning the duel. However, the opponent will certainly fight to the death if a PC does this, to avoid Exeter's wrath. The gems can withstand 10 points of damage and are AC 4.

The Duels: The duels will commence at high noon. The PCs are given no time to prepare. When the PCs are ushered to the arena, Exeter announces the duels, which will occur in the following order:

1. Ratha Rann vs. Icehand, the frost giant.
2. Matilda vs. Maralix, an 11th level fighter.
3. Sagrais vs. Hedgeheart, a 10th level dwarven thief.
4. Henry vs. Simon, a 10th level illusionist.
5. Ada vs. Chillclaw, a gelugon.
6. Wemick vs. Exeter.

As the duels start, the first bout will be fought cleanly, Ratha vs. the giant. As this is going on, the party notices that Exeter's group is casting spells, preparing for their duels. The PCs can do the same, although they will have to have

THE CHALLENGE



any spells cast, or potions drunk, before the duel is called.

If the party wins four or more of the duels:

As the last duel is over, and you snatch up the last gem, the crowd roars. Nellie apparently snuck off and recovered her hammer, and is now leading the old residents of the home in their fight against the mercenaries. The crowd makes short work of them. Using chair legs, umbrellas, staves and the like, they chase them out of the home. Nellie slays the mercenary leader, and with that the rest of the mercenaries break and run.

If the party loses the duels:

There is a roar from the crowd as Exeter and his remaining allies draw together. Suddenly Nellie appears and flings her hammer, smashing three of the stones before they can be brought together. She then begins to throw the hammer again at Exeter's party, while the residents turn on the mercenaries in fury. Exeter's party flees for their lives, and the mercenaries are quickly dispatched. In spite of the fact that you fell, and failed, you must still admit that there is no substitute for experience.

Exeter's Group

Exeter has gathered the following allies.

Icehand (Frost Giant): Int Low; AL CE; AC 0; MV 12; HD 14+ 1-4; hp 75; THAC0 7; #AT 1; Dmg 2-16+9; SA Hurling rocks for 2d10 points of damage; SD Impervious to cold; SZ H; ML 13; XP 7,000.

Icehand carries a huge battle axe +1 (remember to apply the appropriate bonuses to the unadjusted statistics listed above), and a sack containing three throwing rocks.

Combat tactics: Tactics, what's tactics? I throws me rock, then I takes me axe and cuts him to pieces. Little ones.

Icehand joined Exeter for the money.

Maralix: Int Average; AL CE; AC 3; MV 6; HD 11 (F11); hp 72; THAC0 10; #AT 3/2; Dmg 2-7; SA +4 "to hit," +7 damage and two attacks a round from trident specialization, magical weapon, and 18/23 Strength, one extra attack each round with net; SZ M; ML 14; XP 5,000.

Maralix wears plate mail and carries a net and a *trident +2*.

Combat tactics: Maralix will move quickly to close with Matilda. He uses his net as a secondary weapon, attempting to entangle Matilda. Use the rules for nets in the *Complete Fighter's Handbook*. If you don't have the *Handbook*, Maralix must hit his opponent with a −2 penalty (−6 with the secondary weapon "to hit" penalty). Once entangled, Matilda must make a Dexterity check to get free.

Maralix joined Exeter just to cause trouble for those weaker than himself. If reduced to 10 hit points or less he will surrender, and try to flee the home.

Hedgeheart: Int Average; AL NE; AC 5; MV 6; HD 10 (T10); hp 44; THAC0 16; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SA +2 "to hit," and damage from magical weapon, poison; SZ S; ML 14; XP 4,000.

Hedgeheart carries a *short sword +2* treated with type E poison (immediate death, save vs. poison for 20 points of damage), which is good for one hit.

Combat tactics: Hedgeheart plays to win. Before the duel, he received a

stoneskin spell from Exeter. This completely negates the first six attacks against Hedgeheart, hit or miss. Sagrais will have to be resourceful to win this duel (wrestling or overbearing attacks would help negate Hedgeheart's advantage).

Hedgeheart joined Exeter for the money.

Simon: Int Exceptional; AL LE; AC 5; MV 12; HD 10 (W10); hp 37; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-4; SZ M; ML 15; XP 4,000.

Simon wears *bracers of defense AC 5,* and carries a *dagger +2* and a *wand of magic missiles* (23 charges).

Spells remaining: *Chromatic orb** (×2), *blur, color spray, detect magic, hypnotism, blindness, mirror image, improved phantasmal force, hold person* (×2), *phantom steed, fire shield, phantasmal killer, shadow magic.*

* New spell from the *Complete Wizard's Handbook.* If you don't have this book, replace this spell with *grease.*

Combat tactics: Simon will not move to close, trusting in his spells. Before the duel, he casts *blur* on himself. When facing Henry, he starts with a distance spell, perhaps a *shadow magic fireball.* He then tries *phantasmal killer,* and *hold person.* He then moves close enough to use his *chromatic orbs.* If both are still standing after all of this, he casts blindness at Henry, grabs the gem, and runs.

Simon is a spell stealer who joined Exeter so he could prey on other illusionists and steal their spell books. Exeter promised him all of Henry's stuff, perhaps exaggerating about some of it.

Chillclaw: Int Genius; AL LE; AC −3; MV 15; HD 11; hp 56; THAC0 9; #AT 4; Dmg 1-4 +4/1-4 +4/2-8 +4/3-12 +4; SZ H (12′ tall); MR 50%; ML 16; XP 39,500.

Chillclaw, a baatezu, is immune to cold and takes half damage from fire. He can be hit only by silver weapons (half damage) or magical weapons of +2 or better enchantment. He regenerates two points of damage each round. He can use the following abilities at will, once a round: *advanced illusion, charm person, suggestion, teleport without error, detect magic, polymorph self, wall of ice, fly,* and generate *fear* in a 10′ radius. He has infravision and continually *detects invisibility* and *knows alignment.* A hit from his tail causes the victim to save vs. paralyzation or be *slowed* from numbing cold for 2d4 rounds. Chillclaw can *gate* other baatezu, but will not do so during this adventure.

Combat tactics: Chillclaw wants to defeat Ada soundly. He will start by blocking her escape with *wall of ice,* trusting in his magic resistance to protect him from Ada's spells. Then he casts *fly,* and closes, swooping with claws extended. He will melee until he is down to 20 hit points or less, then fly into the air, dropping a *wall of ice* on Ada. Note that if Ada is near the gem at this time, the gem may be destroyed.

Exeter summoned Chillclaw with a magical scroll. Exeter really isn't powerful enough to control him. The bait, a high priestess of Tyr, was more than enough motivation for the creature. He doesn't care a whit about Exeter's silly duels, he just wants the cleric. He easily could "win" just by *teleporting,* but can't resist getting his claws into a cleric in an even fight. If a general battle erupts, Chillclaw will use all his abilities to cause as much destruction as possible for three rounds, then *teleport* away.

Exeter, the Excellent Mage Most Magnificent: Int Genius; AL N (insanity causes fluctuations); AC 4; MV 12; HD 12 (W12); hp 27; THAC0 17; #AT 1; Dmg 1-6; SZ M; ML 15; XP 6,000.

Exeter wears *bracers of defense AC 4,* a *ring of feather falling,* and a *brooch of shielding* (33 points). He carries a *staff of striking* (9 charges), a *potion of flying,* and a *wand of fire* (13 charges). He receives a +2 bonus on saves vs. mental attacks (Wisdom 16).

Spells remaining: *Burning hands, magic missile* (×2), *unseen servant, continual light, detect invisibility, invisibility, shatter, dispel magic, hold person, Melf's minute meteors, slow, fumble, polymorph other, stoneskin, telekinesis* (×2), *fumble, cone of cold, teleport, globe of invulnerability.*

Combat tactics: Exeter is finally going to show everyone that he is a better wizard than Wemick. He does not want this fight to end quickly. Before the duel starts, he casts a *stoneskin,* and a *globe of invulnerability.* (The *globe* will stop most of Wemick's spells, although it can be brought down with a *dispel magic.*) Exeter begins the duel with his flashiest offensive spell, probably *cone of cold.* If the spell assault fails, Exeter screams in frustration and closes with Wemick. He pounds on Wemick with his *staff of striking,* using three charges every strike, until one of them is dead.

Exeter's Background

I am an incredible wizard. I'll show them all. For many years I traveled with that old fool Wemick and the company of the Swan. Company of the Sitting Duck is more like it. None of them ever gave me the credit I deserved. It was always "We'll run in and Wemick will cast his spell." I am just as good, if not better than Wemick ever was. I could tolerate the slights while adventuring, but once I retired to the home, the years of stories about how "Wemick did this, Wemick did that," finally got to me. I left the home and resumed adventuring. Now, I am a full wizard, plus a little more, and Wemick will have to admit I am the more accomplished spell caster. That is, if he can still talk after I get through with him. He'll pay for all those insults, they'll all pay.

I did my research carefully, I know who is still strong enough to fight at the home. My group is carefully tailored to defeat that band of old fumblers. I am not really comfortable around Chillclaw, but someone has to fight the stupid cleric.

Running Exeter: Exeter suffers from a severe persecution complex, with a bit of an inferiority complex, and some delusions of grandeur thrown in for good measure. He is capable of deciding anything, for any reason. He is a competent wizard, his madness in no way affects his spell casting abilities or intelligence. He has a total fixation on Wemick, and is perfectly willing to see everyone die if he can only defeat Wemick once and for all. Of course he has a *teleport* spell in reserve; he may be crazy, but he's not stupid.

Nellie Thursday

Nellie Thursday: Int High; AL NG; AC 10; MV 6; HD 8 (F8); hp 55; THAC0 13; #AT ½; Dmg 2-5; SA +6 "to hit" +11 damage from magic weapon and stone giant strength; SZ M; ML 16; XP Nil.

Nellie carries a ring of *stone giant strength* hidden on her person. When she reappears after the duels, she wears the *ring* and wields a *war hammer +3 dwarven thrower.*

Nellie owns and manages the home. She is 331 years old and has been running the home for about 75 years. Her *hammer* hangs over the mantel in the front room. Nellie is a kindly soul and still a very competent fighter. ❑

A New Crystal Sphere

Combat, Planets, And The Aliens of Sol

by Timothy B. Brown

Space: 1889 ships fighting spelljamming vessels, the Earth as a new world, and Sol residents as AD&D® game creatures complete the new crystal sphere with this issue.

Battles between spelljammers and liftwood vessels in an atmosphere should be played using the SPELLJAMMER™ rules or the *War Captain's Companion* rules, on the 500-yard hex grid. All liftwood vessels, including kites, have a maneuverability rating of D. Kites must move with or against the wind, as described in the Aerial Combat section of the *SPACE: 1889* rules book (page 103).

To convert *SPACE: 1889* ships for SPELLJAMMER game use, reference the following material.

Built By: Earthmen or Martians

Used Primarily By: Same

Tonnage: Divide the listed tonnage by 10 to find the tonnage in SPELLJAMMER game terms.

Hull Points: For most ships, this is equal to the tonnage value. However, for British gunboats with heavy metal armor (such as the Steam Launch and the *Aphid*-class ships), hull points are double the tonnage value.

Crew: As determined for each ship in *SPACE: 1889.*

Maneuverability Class: D for all liftwood ships.

Landing—Land or Water: As determined for each ship in *SPACE: 1889.* Generally yes for land, no for water.

Armor Rating: The liftwood vessels on Mars and Earth are sturdy. To find their armor rating for the SPELLJAMMER setting, use a base value of 6 and subtract the vessel's *SPACE: 1889* armor value.

Saves As: Martian vessels save as thick wood. Earth vessels save as metal.

Power Type: List the appropriate power source: steam engine, screw, kite, etc.

Ship's Rating: For tactical movement, a liftwood vessel receives one point of SR for every 500 yards it can move in one minute. The formula is Movement Rating x 0.8, rounded to the nearest whole number. Here are the SR equivalents for liftwood vessels. For kites, the SR is one plus the roll of 1d4, rolled at the beginning of each turn.

Hullcutter Screw Galley	2
Small Bird Screw Galley	2
Aerial Steam Launch	4
Zeppelin	5
Aphid-class Aerial Gunboat	5

Standard Armament: List all the weapons and crews detailed in *SPACE: 1889.*

Cargo: Unless otherwise noted in the original *SPACE: 1889* source, liftwood vessels have a cargo capacity equal to ¼ their SPELLJAMMER game tonnage.

Keel and Beam Length: As determined from the *SPACE: 1889* source.

As an example, we present the *Aphid*-class Aerial Gunboat, statted out for SPELLJAMMER™ game play.

The Aphid-class Aerial Gunboat

Built By: Earthmen, specifically British Earthmen

Used Primarily By: Earthmen

Tonnage: 16 tons

Hull Points: 32

Crew: 15

Maneuverability Class: D

Landing—Land: Yes

Landing—Water: No

Armor Rating: 4

Saves As: Metal

Power Type: Steam engine and propeller

Ship's Rating: 5

Standard Armament:

1 4″ short gun
Crew: 2

2 Hotchkiss 1-pounder cannons
Crew: 1 each

2 5-barrel Nordenfelt machineguns
Crew: 1 each

Cargo: 4 tons

Keel Length: 72 feet

Beam Length: 18 feet

Special Considerations: Liftwood vessels can suffer a loss of trim, as described in the *SPACE: 1889* rules book. Determine the altitude of battles within an atmosphere before play begins. Liftwood ships cannot climb higher than 24,000 feet above the surface of a planet—spelljammers have no such restriction. Ether flyers do not have an air envelope, due in part to their ether drive system.

SPACE: 1889 Ship Weaponry

Weapon	Range	Hull Damage	Personal Damage	ROF	#Per	THAC0	CH
Maxim	0	1-3	4-40	4/1	1	8	—
Gardner	0	1-3	3-30	3/1	1	8	—
Nordenfelt	0	1-3	4-40	4/1	1	8	—
1-pdr	1	1-4	1-8	4/1	1	12	20
3-pdr	1	1-6	1-12	4/1	1	10	20
6-pdr	2	2-8	2-16	4/1	2	10	19+
4″ short	2	2-8	2-16	2/1	2	10	19+
4″ long	3	2-12	2-20	2/1	2	8	19+
5″	3	2-16	2-24	2/1	2	8	18+
6″	4	2-20	3-30	2/1	2	8	18+
8″	4	3-24	3-36	1/1	2	8	17+
10″	5	3-30	4-40	1/1	3	8	16+
12″	6	4-32	4-40	1/1	3	8	15+
14″	7	4-40	6-60	1/1	4	8	13+
16″	8	5-50	6-72	1/1	4	8	11+
Sweeper	0	0	2-16	3/1	1	10	—
Light	0	1-3	1-8	2/1	1	14	20
Rod Gun	1	1-6	1-6	1/1	2	12	19+
Heavy	1	2-8	2-16	2/1	2	12	19+
Rogue	1	2-12	2-16	1/1	3	10	19+
Lob Gun	1	2-16	2-20	1/1	3	16	16+

Putting a Helm on a Gunboat or Etherflyer: It's an easy task to put a helm onto a liftwood vessel or an ether flyer. Using the tonnage calculated, a minor helm can move a ship of up to 50 tons. A major helm can move a ship of up to 100 tons. Special helms also can be fitted to these ships, according to the rules presented in the *Concordance of Arcane Space.* The ship's rating changes according to the helm type and level of the spellcaster. With a helm, each ship gains an air envelope and gravity plane as for other spelljammers.

Putting a Cannon on Spelljamming Vessels: The lethality and accuracy of Earthman and Martian weapons makes them ideal for spelljammers. New weapons must replace old ones or else eat into the ship's available cargo space, one ton per additional weapon. Ammunition for these guns takes up one ton per 1,000 rounds (or 10,000 rounds for machine guns).

Science Versus Magic

Though magic poor, the worlds of the Sol crystal sphere exist within the magical universe. Magic, alchemy, and the true nature of the planes have been skirted around by inventive humans for centuries. However, introduction to the realities of the universe will change the human outlook toward technology forever.

Physics Versus SPELLJAMMER™ Setting Physics: Human beings have had Newtonian physics right all along, but their theories about the macroverse have been wrong for some time. Exactly what lies between the planets and the crystal spheres never has been discovered nor accurately predicted. Only recently, through exploration using ether flyers, have humans begun to piece together the gravitation puzzle—objects have their own gravity planes based upon their geometric shape with a universal level of attraction (one Earth gravity).

Chemical Versus Alchemical: Similarly, both humans and Martians have mistakenly interpreted the evidence regarding the microverse. The ancient cultures of the Earth, such as the Greeks, Mayans, and Chinese, developed the basis of the correct four elemental nature of the microverse, but their groundwork was abandoned by "more enlightened" civilizations. Notions of the atom have been, for the most part, inaccurate, but they have been correct enough for humans to stumble on electricity and its applications. All matter is made up of mixtures of the four elements.

Gunpowder Versus Smokepowder: Though similar in effect, these two products are vastly different. Gunpowder is an alchemical powder with a large portion of fire locked within it—introduction of an outside source of fire releases the gunpowder's fire suddenly and violently. Smokepowder is also an alchemical compound that contains fire, but it is set off magically. The two are not interchangeable. British weapons, for instance, cannot be loaded with smokepowder ammunition. Gunpowder is a new creation in Wildspace, and it will be some time before alchemists have developed the means to make it themselves. In the meantime, the only source of gunpowder is the Sol crystal sphere.

Spelljamming Versus Ether Propellers: Ether propellers work by creating a temporary interface between the Prime Material and the Ethereal planes. An electrical field allows the blades of the propeller to "push" against the border Ethereal, creating motion on the Prime Material. Spelljammers are powered by the magic of spellcasters.

Electricity Versus Magical Enchantment: Electricity works in the four elemental universe. Its exact nature is unclear, but appearantly has something to do with moving elemental fire along an unbroken series of earth particles. Alchemists in Wildspace will study the principles for years before beginning to understand them.

The Worlds of the Sol Sphere

Published materials for *SPACE: 1889* provide a wealth of materials for SPELLJAMMER™ campaigns. Each world is addressed in different products, and each world presents its own assets and problems for conversion.

Earth

The many countries and cities of Earth will beckon spelljammers of all sorts. Trade of gold and magic for technology will spawn a new age for the mother planet of the Earthmen. *Conklin's Atlas of the Worlds* gives maps and detailed information about Earth for a *SPACE: 1889*/SPELLJAMMER game crossover campaign. Read the boxed set carefully—Victorian scholars might show great interest in AD&D® game characters and creatures, but panic may easily engulf the common folk.

Luna

The surface of Luna is a barren, airless place. The planet's natives, the Selenites and Moon Men, live underground in the caverns of their honeycombed world. Spelljammers visiting Luna easily can take part in the *Luna* adventure from the *SPACE: 1889* rules book, encountering the selenites and the mad Russian inventor Vladimir Tereshkova in the great canyon on the moon's dark side. They could then continue with the *River of Life* adventure presented in *Tales From the Ether,* where they will discover the moon men themselves. Since these adventures are exploratory, they require little modification for the SPELLJAMMER setting.

Mars

Mars is, by far, the best explored world in the *SPACE: 1889* universe. Adventures and campaign materials for Mars are presented in the original rules book, *Tales From the Ether, More Tales From the Ether, Beastmen of Mars, Canal Priests of Mars, Caravans of Mars, Cloud Captains of Mars,* and *Steppelords of Mars.* The boardgame *Temple of the Beastmen* also makes a fine adventure possibility. Of course, all of these adventures presume exploration by pistol-armed Earthmen, not magical sword-wielding spelljammers. Some care must be taken to modify the situations and reactions before play can begin.

Mercury

Touched upon only briefly, Mercury's Twilight Zone is an interesting place to visit, described in the adventure "The Burning Desert" in *Tales From the Ether.*

Venus

The Venusian lizard men are, in fact, a lost tribe of AD&D® game lizard men fallen into relative barbarism. While no true adventure is presented in the *SPACE: 1889* rules book for Venus, there is source material. The adventure "Drums Along the Border" in *Tales From the Ether* takes place on Venus, presenting a situation ideal for spelljammers. Venusian animals are dinosaurs; use the Dinosaur entries from *Monstrous Compendium 3, Forgotten Realms Appendix* for Venusian monster statistics.

Human, Earthman

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Any
FREQUENCY:	Common
ORGANIZATION:	Solitary/Nation
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Day
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi-to Genius (3-18)
TREASURE:	—
ALIGNMENT:	Any
NO. APPEARING:	1 (1-20)
ARMOR CLASS:	10
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	1
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-6 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Concentrated Fire
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (6')
MORALE:	Unreliable to Fearless (2-20)
XP VALUE:	35

Earthmen are, technologically speaking, the most advanced race in the Sol crystal sphere. On the other hand, when it comes to magic, they are the least sophisticated.

Earthmen are indistinguishable from other humans in Wildspace. An Earthman's specific land of origin can be determined by his dress, speech, and ethnicity. Earthman males tend to wear rugged clothing suited to their occupations, though females, especially those from Europe or America, tend to wear far less functional clothing in favor of tradition and style.

Earthmen speak a variety of languages, including all those found on the Languages of the Sol Sphere table. None of these languages is spoken elsewhere in Wildspace. Spelljammers wishing to make contact will most often have to use magical or psionic means of communication.

Combat: Individually, Earthmen are unremarkable warriors. Many aren't even trained in the use of melee weapons, relying instead upon firearms. Earthmen from the Colonial powers (Britain, America, Japan, Russia, etc.) are generally armed with firearms. Earthmen from non-Colonial powers may have firearms, but the majority are more likely to wield melee weapons.

In organized groups, Earthmen with firearms can coordinate their fire to achieve greater results. Under the direction of an officer (who does not fire his own weapon), any group of 10 or more Earthman soldiers gains a +1 bonus to their attack rolls and morale checks. Also, opponents suffer a −1 penalty to their morale checks, since they are coming under devastating volley fire. If the officer is killed or leaves the vicinity, the modifiers are lost.

Habitat/Society: Spelljammers are most likely to come into contact with Earthmen from the Colonial powers where Victorian values dictate behavior. Essays on the Victorian age can be found in the *SPACE: 1889* rules book.

There are also countless other cultures of Earthmen among the non-Colonial powers. Some of these practice rudimentary magic (both clerical and wizardly).

Ecology: Because of their technological muscle, Earthmen to this date have been the dominant race of their own planet and begun colonization of Mars, Mercury, and Venus. They are the driving force behind an economic and military family (albeit a bickering family) of nations and colonies that extends through the system. The introduction of magic into this comfortably humming machine may indeed be disastrous.

Lizard Man, Venusian

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Swamps, water
FREQUENCY:	Common (on Venus)
ORGANIZATION:	Family/clan
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi-to Very (2-12)
TREASURE:	Nil
ALIGNMENT:	Any
NO. APPEARING:	2-12
ARMOR CLASS:	7
MOVEMENT:	9, Sw 12
HIT DICE:	1
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-6 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (5-6')
MORALE:	Elite (13-14)
XP VALUE:	15

Venusian lizard men are an offshoot of the more common lizard man race of Wildspace.

The Venusian lizard man is relatively short, standing between five and six feet in height. His feet are three-toed and webbed, but his hands are quite intricate, having three fingers and an opposable thumb. The Venusian lizard man's long tail and webbed feet assist him in swimming. When running, the Venusian lizard man prefers to use all four limbs, sliding along on his belly across the damp ground. The skin on his back is dark green or gray-brown, and his belly is usually a lighter shade.

Venusian lizard men speak a primitive version of their original language known as Low Lizard Man. Communication between speakers of the lizard man language and those speaking Low Lizard Man is possible, but the possibility of miscommunication is everpresent.

Combat: Venusian lizard men fashion their native weapons from the oma jolima, a reed-like plant of their native world. Javelins, harpoons, spears, arrows, clubs, axes, and maces can be made from the plant. Some Venusian lizard men have acquired firearms from the colonizing Earthmen, though ammunition is in short supply.

The oma jolima plant can also be formed into helmets and other armor. A Venusian lizard man so armored has an effective AC of 3.

Venusian lizard men are particularly adept at water combat. By absorbing oxygen through the belly skin one can stay submerged for as long as an hour.

Habitat/Society: Venusian lizard men live in simple family and clan groups, working as hunters and gatherers in their vast swamps. Some of them have begun to improve their lives, using primitive agriculture to feed themselves, settling into villages with more specialized occupations, but this is still the exception and not the rule.

Earthman colonists, especially those from Germany, have taken steps to tame Venus and its lizard man natives. Some Venusian lizard men have adopted the ways of the Colonials, abandoning their primitive lifestyles for the values and material possessions of the Earthmen.

Ecology: Venusian lizard men are eager to trade their stone and reed items for valuable metal tools and items that won't corrode in the constant rain of their swampy homes.

Martian, High

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Mountains, kraags
FREQUENCY:	Uncommon
ORGANIZATION:	Monarchy/clan
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Semi-to Genius (2-18)
TREASURE:	Varies
ALIGNMENT:	Neutral Evil
NO. APPEARING:	2-8
ARMOR CLASS:	10
MOVEMENT:	12, Fl 18 (B)
HIT DICE:	1+1
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1 or 2
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-6 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (6')
MORALE:	Champion (15-16)
XP VALUE:	35

High Martians are the original stock from which the other two Martian races descended. High Martians are savage raiders who terrorize their world from their mountain fastnesses.

High Martians are upright bipeds that can grow to six feet in height. Their hands and feet are all three-toed, grasping appendages, and wing membranes extend from their backs to either arm. High Martians have thick, black hair that covers their head, back, and shoulders. High Martians wear a simple loincloth and may decorate their bodies with other ornamentation.

High Martians have their own language. Many speak other martian languages, particularly Koline (the trade language) or the languages of the Earthmen. Every High Martian monarch has interpreters.

Combat: High Martians have a lifting gland that supports them in flight; their wings are used mostly for balance and maneuvering. When in flight, a high martian can attack twice with his hands, inflicting 1d6 points of damage each, or he may wield up to two weapons, attacking with each once per round. While standing, a high martian can only attack once per round, either with hands or weapons.

Habitat/Society: A number of High Martian families form clans, and a number of clans organize themselves behind a single monarch. The monarch is usually tested in personal combat by all comers—a High Martian king is often the most able warrior in the clans.

High Martians survive by raiding. They raid canal Martians and Earthmen at will, striking from the air whenever possible. They are also free to attack liftwood vessels in flight, swarming them to seize both ship and cargo.

High Martians have, on occasion, been known to trade, particularly in valuable liftwood and slaves taken in raids.

Ecology: When a High Martian dies, its lifting gland quickly loses its valuable properties.

Canal Martian: Canal Martians are taller and larger than High Martians, attaining seven feet in height. Canal Martians have no lifting gland or wings, so they cannot fly, and their feet have lost the ability to grasp objects, so they are limited to a single attack per round. The canal Martians have lighter coloration than their high Martian cousins. Canal martians dress in a style similar to that of ancient Egypt. There are a number of vanal Martian languages, including High Oenotrian, Parhooni, Koline, and Umbran.

Canal Martians live in the canal cities of their own making. Their civilization, while once the most elaborate and successful on Mars, is most definitely in decline.

Hill Martian: A hill Martian is for the most part a wilderness version of a canal Martian; hill Martians cannot fly and don't have grasping feet. They are darker than canal martians, with brown, black, or even deep red hair that grows over most of their bodies. They dress mainly in the skins of animals and similar, primitive garb, though those in contact with canal Martians often adopt their dress. Hill Martians speak a variety of languages particular to their many cultures.

Hill Martians have a variety of cultures, all beyond the reach of the canal princes and their power. They are frontiersmen, living by various means in the wildernesses of their world.

Moon Man

CLIMATE/TERRAIN:	Lunar caverns
FREQUENCY:	Uncommon
ORGANIZATION:	Theocracy
ACTIVITY CYCLE:	Any
DIET:	Omnivore
INTELLIGENCE:	Average to Genius (8-18)
TREASURE:	Varies
ALIGNMENT:	Lawful neutral
NO. APPEARING:	1 (2-12)
ARMOR CLASS:	10
MOVEMENT:	12
HIT DICE:	1
THAC0:	19
NO. OF ATTACKS:	1
DAMAGE/ATTACK:	1-4 or by weapon
SPECIAL ATTACKS:	Nil
SPECIAL DEFENSES:	Nil
MAGIC RESISTANCE:	Nil
SIZE:	M (6')
MORALE:	Average (8-10)
XP VALUE:	15

Moon men are the survivors of an advanced technological civilization. In fact, they are not native to Luna, having escaped to the moon from the planet Vulcan before it exploded to create the present asteroid belt beyond Mars.

Moon men are vaguely humanoid, and of approximately the same size. Their arms are quite long, ending in three-fingered hands, and their legs are comparatively small, sporting two-toed feet. Their skin color is pale blue, revealing blood vessels and muscles beneath its thin surface. Moon men wear a variety of clothing depending on their position within society.

Moon men speak their own language.

Combat: Moon men aren't particularly effective unarmed fighters. However, they can be armed with knives (1d4 damage), spears (1d6 damage), clubs (1d6 damage), sabers (1d8 damage), or even electric rifles. Electric rifles have a short range of 50 yards, medium range of 100 yards, and long range of 150 yards, and they inflict 1d8 points of damage. A single weapon has 1d100 shots remaining before it must be recharged. Magical protection from electricity or lightning may nullify the damage inflicted by an electric rifle. On any attack roll of 1 an electric rifle is jammed and must be repaired.

Habitat/Society: The moon men are governed by the science priests, councilors who protect the ancient tomes of technology and preach from them.

Ecology: The moon men have great electrical technology locked up in their manuals of knowledge, if they can be wrested from the science priests.

Continued on page 31

Into The Dark

Leftovers Again?

by James Lowder

Deadlines being what they are—and any word that has "dead" in it can't be good, can it?—I was caught without a theme for this month's column. Accordingly, I scurried around and dug up the notes I'd made on various films that didn't fit in previous columns or were just strange enough not to fit in anywhere else.

You can't get any better	*****
Entertaining and enjoyable	****
There are worse films	***
Wait for cable	**
A waste of good tape	*

Cast a Deadly Spell

1991, 93 Minutes
HBO

Director: Martin Campbell
Cast: Fred Ward, David Warner, Julianne Moore, Clancy Brown
*****1/2**

Los Angeles. 1948. Everybody uses magic—except detective Phil Lovecraft.

The proliferation of Lovecraft-related films has continued unabated since Stuart Gordon's success with his gory versions of "Herbert West: Re-Animator" and "From Beyond." Various films have been completed or merely threatened. Recently, *The Resurrected* was released straight to video, a telling of *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* by the same director who brought the clever *Return of the Living Dead* to the big screen. Most other entries in the Cthulhu sweepstakes have had less potential, including the much-dreaded sequel to *The Unnameable.*

Cast a Deadly Spell was produced to debut on cable's HBO, but found its way onto cassette after some good reviews sparked interest in the film. It is a clever movie, with a sense of humor that is most apparent in the background of many scenes. In the classy nightspot known as The Dunwich Room, bartenders use magic to serve drinks and clean glasses. A good look at the building will reveal it appears as nothing more than a door from the outside.

The plot is a mixture of the *film noir* classics *Chinatown* and *The Maltese Falcon*, and Lovecraft's own horror classic, "The Dunwich Horror." Detective Phil Lovecraft is hired to recover the *Necronomicon,* which was stolen from sorcerer Amos Hackshaw. The scramble for the book leads him deeper into a mystery involving the Vista Bonita housing development (built entirely by zombie labor) and a gate to bring the Old Ones back to Earth.

Fred Ward, of *Tremors* fame, plays Lovecraft with the mixture of cynicism and vulnerability needed for a successful *film noir* detective. Well-heeled bad guy David Warner does his usual nice work as the polished but ultimately violent Hackshaw. The real stand-out in the cast is Arnitia Walker, who gives life to the small but juicy role of Hypolite Kropotkin, the witch who owns Lovecraft's building.

Cast a Deadly Spell is best when it's paying homage to other films or borrowing heavily from other stories. Some of the sharpest sequences come from *Curse of the Demon* and the short story, "Casting the Runes," upon which it's based. Campbell also shows a flair for working great dark fantasy elements into scenes in graphic ways—the interdimensional Dunwich Club, for example. With its zombies and werewolves, conjured demons and unicorn-hunting virgins, the world of *Cast a Deadly Spell* is instantly intriguing.

Campbell succeeds in juggling all the source films and the enthralling elements that make up the background world right up until the last few scenes. After using *film noir* and horror fiction conventions so cleverly, he lets the climax slide into cliche. Sure, we get a pretty good monster with suitably dripping tentacles, but the villain is undone by the comic relief, in a manner that is clear from the first act.

Cast a Deadly Spell sets itself up as a film for people who love *film noir* detective movies and Lovecraftian horror tales. It provides great in-jokes and a compelling world for those who are well-read and well-viewed. It fails to satisfy because it cannot offer any twist on the old stand-bys, sinking into the mire of cliches it uses so cleverly right up until the conclusion.

Curse of the Demon

1957, 95 Minutes
Columbia
Director: Jacques Tournier
Cast: Dana Andrews, Peggy Cummins, Niall MacGinnis
******1/2**

Based on the M. R. James short story "Casting the Runes," this spiffy horror film has inspired lots of modern flicks, including the recent psuedo-Lovecraft epic, *Cast a Deadly Spell.*

After the gruesome murder of Professor Harrington, his niece (Peggy Cummins) and a psychologist friend (Dana Andrews) investigate his death. At the same time, the psychologist pushes forward the late professor's inquiry into the Satanic cult lead by Julian Karswell (Niall MacGinnis). The two investigations intersect, and our hero soon finds himself running from an ancient fire demon Karswell has set upon his trail. *Curse of the Demon* is an atmospheric, well-written chiller. The heroes are all smart and believable, the villains equally intelligent and quite dangerous. The viewers can easily identify with the skeptical psychologist, who doesn't believe Karswell to be in possession of true supernatural powers until the demon of the title puffs smoke down his neck. Karswell, on the other hand, presents a perfectly acceptable motivation for his evil deeds—fear, which he believes drives everyone, at one level or another.

The film's only major weakness is the demon itself. The long-distance shots of the huge creature running out of the air and the accompanying sound effects are chilling. The close-ups just aren't as effective.

The battle between Tournier and the studio over the demon is legendary—the director didn't want to show it, preferring to let the viewer fill in the monster's features; the execs thought the film just wasn't scary without the thing's hideous face. Tournier was right, though *Curse of the Demon* still stands as one of the best supernatural horror films ever made.

The Body Snatcher

1945, 77 Minutes
RKO
Director: Robert Wise
Cast: Boris Karloff, Bela Lugosi, Henry Daniell, Russell Wade
*****

The Body Snatcher was the eighth and final film that featured both Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. It occurred during a high point in Karloff's career, when directors and studios were discovering how talented and versatile an actor he was; the opposite was true for Lugosi. At the time he was cast in the film, his career was on the skids and he had just acquired the morphine addiction that helped accelerate his sad fall from stardom.

Based on a Robert Louis Stevenson short story of 1885, "The Body-Snatcher," the film tells the creepy tale of Doctor MacFarland, who runs a medical school in 1830s Scotland, and John Gray, a cabman who supplements his income by stealing bodies for the students to dissect. And when there are no new burials or the graveyards are too well guarded, Gray happily provides his own fresh carrion. MacFarland can't turn the murderer in, though, for Gray knows too much about the good doctor's shady past.

The strength of the movie is its emphasis on mood. Like all the films Val Lewton produced for RKO, *The Body Snatcher* is a study in understated horror. The dialogue is bright and chilling, especially in the scenes where Gray (Karloff) casually discusses gathering corpses or how best to "burke" a victim (a method of suffocation perfected by the real grave-robbers, Burke and Hare). With clever use of sound and setting, Lewton and director Robert Wise manage to keep us on edge; the noise of Gray's cab rattling through the misty streets as he searches for victims is a heck of a lot more frightening than its more contemporary equivalent: a guy in a hockey mask with a bloody axe in one hand and a severed head in the other.

Karloff shines as Gray, and the rest of the cast is equally inspired. Lugosi has a very small part, despite his second billing; he plays Joseph, MacFarland's sneaky butler. The fact that Karloff "burkes" Lugosi part of the way through the film must have been especially galling for the once-powerful star of *Dracula*. After all, Karloff got his big break in Hollywood because Lugosi refused the role of the Monster in Universal's *Frankenstein* (the part required too much make-up and had no dialogue). If the actors had done no further films, *The Body Snatcher* would have been evidence enough that Karloff had won the title of Hollywood's horror king.

The Monster Squad

1987, 82 Minutes
Tri-Star/Vestron
Director: Fred Dekker
Cast: Andre Gower, Duncan Regehr, Tom Noonan, Ashley Bank
***1/2

Dracula has come to America in search of a magic amulet. Should he find the doodad and destroy it, he will upset the cosmic balance in favor of Evil. To help him in his quest, he calls his old pals—the werewolf, the gill-man, the mummy, and Frankenstein's monster. Against him stands the Monster Squad, a bunch of kids who spend their time reading monster comics and debating how many ways there are to kill werewolves.

The resulting film is a pleasant cross between the old Universal all-star monsterfests like *House of Frankenstein* and the annoyingly bad Spielberg/Donner fiasco, *The Goonies*. It really outdoes the latter at its own game; the kids are all likeable and act as if they're kids (something rare in these sorts of films). The monsters are pretty good, too. FX genius Stan Winston's neat gill-man and mummy outfits provide the best scares, though they get little screen time. As Dracula, Duncan Regehr is stiff and prissy, more concerned with the folds of his cape than frightening people. With talent like that, he probably landed a job as a mannequin at Sears right after shooting closed down.

Overall, *The Monster Squad* proves too gentle for its own good. There never really seems to be much danger, despite all the monsters lurking about, and the humor isn't nearly strong enough to carry the film as a light comedy. The film sort of flounders in the middle, neither a horror flick nor a true horror-comedy. Still, the satire hits the mark on occasion; the comments about slasher film series—here it's *Groundhog Day*—are clever and accurate.

The finale, a monster battle royale, is really quite good, despite a ridiculous plot twist involving the virgin who must open the gate to destroy the baddies. (It's pretty much the same one used in *Cast a Deadly Spell*)

Frankenweenie

1984, 30 Minutes
Disney
Director: Tim Burton
Cast: Barret Oliver, Daniel Stern, Shelley Duval
****

Before he hit the screen as a director of such monumentally big budget productions as *Batman Returns*, Tim Burton did a stint as a house director for Disney. Until recently, the films he did there were unavailable for public consumption. Since the good folks at Chez Mickey discovered the wonders of video rental, however, they've pillaged their vaults. Oh boy. Now we can have a Love Bug-fest every night of the week!

This clever little gem concerns young Victor Frankenstein (Barret Oliver, star of *The Neverending Story*), a normal kid who lives in suburbia with his mom (Shelly Duval), dad (Daniel Stern), and his dog, Sparky. One sad day, Sparky finds himself at the wrong end of a moving Ford. Victor, having the name he does, creates a lab in his attic and revives the pooch. The neighbors, however, don't take kindly to the resurrected dog with the stitches that leak when he drinks water and the bolts in his neck that spark now and then (as is rather appropriate for his name).

What follows is a typical misunderstood-monster story. Filmed in black-and-white, it's filled with homages to classic horror movies of the forties, especially Universal's Frankenstein series. Burton's characteristic strangeness is here, too, though in much milder form than his feature-length efforts; the most inventive sets are the lab made from junk and household appliances and the pet graveyard, complete with morbidly clever tombstones appropriate for dead snakes, fish, and so on.

In many ways, *Frankenweenie* is a less-polished dry run for Burton's later success, *Edward Scissorhands*. Both are tales of monsters who upset a normal neighborhood (which isn't really so normal if you look hard enough). Unlike the feature-length film, *Frankenweenie* has an unqualified happy ending. I suppose we should expect no less from Chez Mickey.

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The Living Galaxy

A Sprinkling of Stardust: Odds & Ends for Campaigns

by Roger E. Moore

So far, every installment of this column has had a guiding theme, from planet-building to smart starships. It's been theme, theme, theme, theme.

Frankly, I'm bored with themes.

This month's column presents a grab bag of bizarre and generally unrelated ideas that have been filling my notebook. None of them look like they could be expanded to fill an entire column—but they each deserve a few paragraphs. Enjoy!

Viral Wars

The idea of using computer viruses as weapons, first mentioned in this column in issue #57, is beginning to grow on me. There was an apparently bogus report following the Persian Gulf war that Americans had secretly sabotaged Iraqi computers by selling virus-laden software to Iraq through third parties. The so-called Michelangelo virus was spread across the world on bulletin-board systems and shareware programs, its mission to sabotage the computers it infected by erasing all data on the hard drives; it was only one of hundreds of such catastrophic programs that have had computer departments tearing their hair out in the past few years. But it wasn't nearly as bad as the 1988 virus created by Cornell University student Robert Morris, which did $96 million in damage to computers nationwide. Creating viruses was a game long before it became a matter of international sabotage, in the form of "Core Wars" games played on mainframe systems by hackers late at night.

It is safe to assume that in the future there will be new computers, new data-storage and data-retrieval systems, and new forms of viruses or other destructive programs to infest them. What if the player characters happen to buy doctored viral software from thieves, saboteurs, or pirates? Perhaps their infected starship will attempt to kill off its crew as it leaves a certain world, then drive itself to another part of the planetary system where it is looted and taken over by enemy forces. Perhaps it will simply monitor the ship's functions but prevent the use of its weapons. Perhaps it will cause the ship to involuntarily store and carry secret information to another star system, where it will secretly make the ship send a transmission to a spy satellite or ground receiver. Perhaps it will play practical jokes on the crew. Anything's possible. The GM can keep this in mind as a long-running minor annoyance in a campaign or turn it into a one-shot nightmare adventure.

Zero-Gee Blues

As all real-life astronauts and cosmonauts know, exposure to weightlessness makes many people throw up, causes fluid redistribution in their bodies, and produces other unwanted and uncomfortable changes in space travelers' physiologies over time (just pray that you don't get a head cold like the entire *Apollo 7* crew did, or you'll know what *real* misery is like).

So, what if the artificial gravity on the characters' ship fails when they're too far out in space to fix it? Go to a library and find some of these books, which detail the physiological changes brought on by zero-gee: *Pioneering Space,* by James and Alcestis Oberg; *How Do You Go to the Bathroom in Space?* by William R. Pogue; and *A House in Space,* by Henry S. F. Cooper, Jr. Then give the characters a taste of misery—with an emergency or unexpected adventure to boot, of course.

A Nation of Moons

One of the usual elements in science fiction settings is a mining civilization strung out across an asteroid belt. "Belters" are usually seen as independent, wary of planetary cultures, and self-reliant. However, in an article entitled "Those Pesky Belters and Their Torchships" (originally in *Galaxy* magazine, May 1974; reprinted in the paperback science anthology, *A Step Farther Out),* writer-scientist Jerry Pournelle pointed out that asteroids are usually scattered so far apart that movement from one to the next would be time consuming and costly. This is not necessarily so in science fiction role playing games, given that the conquest of interstellar travel has probably made interplanetary travel reasonably easy. But asteroid-to-asteroid travel (like travel from one world to another anywhere within a planetary system) will probably have a noteworthy price tag anyway.

Pournelle indicates, however, that there is a grouping of worlds and worldlets within our own solar system that are quite easy to reach from one another: the moons of the gas giant Jupiter. Without going into the statistics he gives, Pournelle makes an interesting case for setting up a human civilization scattered across the moons of Jupiter, each world linked by fast rockets to every other one. Travel times would be very short, and hydrogen fuel for nuclear rockets or power plants would be widely available if you scrape up the hydrogen-rich ices on their surfaces.

Why not apply this principle to gas-giant moon systems in general? Actually, I have seen some modules for various science fiction games that have made use of this point, but it would be nice to see it more developed. Gas giants like Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune are assumed by most modern astronomers to be quite common throughout the universe, and it is very likely that nearly all of them have satellite systems. The player characters would probably meet several of these multiworld groupings, each with a different government system and culture. Perhaps one such group is organized like a confederation, with a balance existing between each world's rights and responsibilities and those of the confederation government. Another group might consist of a tyrannical central world that holds all others near it as subject territories; a third might have no central government at all, being a loosely aligned assortment of minor governments. Some worlds might in political opposition to others or even at war, and different cultural groups might inhabit each world or even different parts of each world. Steve Jackson Games' *GURPS Space* book names many sorts of government types that a multiworld group could support. The adventuring possibilities in such a rich environment are great.

"We've got a problem here"

On April 13, 1970, an oxygen tank aboard *Apollo 13* exploded, severely damaging the electrical system aboard the spacecraft and forcing its crew to abort a planned lunar landing. There's no guarantee that a similar mechanical, electrical, or electronic problem won't appear in a futuristic starship at some incredibly inopportune time, such as when it is isolated in "jump space" on its way to another world, and thus similarly endanger the crew.

If the GM wishes to try this scenario, the details of the disaster should be carefully worked out and set up to occur over a given time period, not all at once. For example, a micrometeorite punctures the hull of a spacecraft, clipping an electrical line and punching through a pipe deep inside the spacecraft. The loss of air from the strike is noted very quickly, but the electrical system problem won't appear for another few minutes until that electrical line is called into service or is checked by routine computer-run maintenance. Meanwhile, coolant fluid is leaking from the punctured pipe into another room, and it could explode at any moment. Maybe a crewman was struck by the tiny particle, adding a medical emergency to the list of troubles. A computer malfunction, a frightened passenger, a mutinous crewman—add one or more of these, and the player characters will remember this jump for the rest of their lives.

The Neighbors

Several science fiction games have picked up on speculations that gas giants like Jupiter could harbor life of their own. Winged or balloonlike aliens chasing each other among titanic clouds of methane, hydrogen, sulfur, and ammonia are an entertaining feature of some games (GDW's *Traveller* and *MegaTraveller* systems come to mind). But what if these always-floating aliens were capable of interstellar travel, and they decided to colonize other gas giants, which humans and similar carbon-based life forms could not use?

The idea of overlapping interstellar empires is an interesting one. The floating aliens would legally own the gas giants, and other aliens like ourselves would own the satellites—unless one side or the other wanted to mine the other side's worlds for natural resources, or station commercial or military bases in the other side's territory. The situation could be quite tricky. Rival gas-giant empires might duel it out within the interstellar territory of "surface world" aliens, or two surface-world groups could stage ship-to-ship battles within the atmospheres of gas giants themselves, especially if one side has been hiding its fleet in the gas giant's cloud cover.

Your Personal Space

It might be that the science fiction game you and your players like best also has an official campaign universe that your group doesn't particularly like, yet you hate to ditch all of the "official" material entirely. This problem is one that I've mostly heard used with the popular *Traveller* and *MegaTraveller* systems, in which gamers yearn to draw out their own sectors of space without using the Third or Shattered Imperium, respectively. However, any game system is prone to this. GMs like to be creative and have a piece of space to call their own.

How can you justify cutting out your own chunk of space and still be a part of the "official" universe? Actually, there are several ways to do this.

1. The easiest and most obvious solution works if the campaign's physical scale is big enough: Use a part of the galaxy that official game materials generally ignore. In West End Games' *Star Wars: The RPG* and FASA's *Star Trek: The RPG,* for example, almost the entire galaxy is assumed to be colonized, and no game product could cover so many worlds. You should have no trouble drawing out planets and suns to your heart's content, and the Empire and United Federation of Planets will still be around. It is also unlikely that GDW will ever detail every part of the Shattered Imperium, so you can borrow whatever part you like and fine-tune it to your heart's content.

2. If the game scale is more restricted, as it in GDW's *2300 AD* system and TSR's STAR FRONTIERS® game (each of which have but a few dozen inhabited worlds), you have the option of the "lost ship colonies." This idea is used to good effect in *Traveller* Adventure 5, *Trillion Credit Squadron,* in the section on the Islands Clusters Campaign (pages 40-47). Gigantic generation-travel starships moving at sublight speeds are assumed to have been sent out from Earth in the past, before the discovery of faster-than-light drives, and these colony ships then dropped off their loads of humanity all over the place—some perhaps even in small neighboring galaxies and star clusters. Eventually, one or more such ships entered your current campaign area to set up colonies, and your campaign was born. The colonists might have only rumor and hearsay about their origins, perhaps having degenerated over the centuries like the crew in Robert Heinlein's *Orphans of the Sky* or Brian Aldiss's *Starship* (also called *Non-Stop).* However, they eventually build themselves up to the current status of the campaign the GM wants. Even without generation starships, almost all science fiction games allow for other sorts of lost starships that vanish into jumpspace, hyperspace, or what have you. Lost-ship colonies are easy to set up and give you the freedom you want to "stay official" yet do your own thing, too. (See *Unnight,* for Steve Jackson Games' *GURPS Space* game, for an example of what such a world might look like.)

Time for Everything

In hard-core "space opera" campaigns, some of the themes you might find in the wilder science fiction tales are likely to be missing. In particular, you aren't likely to find much mention of time travel, unless you are using the *Time Master* or *Doctor Who* games, from 54°40′ Orphyte and FASA, respectively. It is an axiom in science fiction writing that authors should avoid having their audiences swallow too many "big lies" all at once for their stories to be more believable. In gaming terms, it's okay to have interstellar travel or time travel, but not always both, as that produces too much potential campaign chaos and demands too much suspension of disbelief on the part of the players.

On a limited scale, however, it might not be a bad idea to set up an adventure in which the PCs are the subjects of a time-travel experiment, in the course of either taking part in a planned scientific experiment or messing with Ancient Alien Artifacts That No Being Was Meant to Touch. You will have to consider some heavy concepts here, such as: Do you want the PCs to go into the future or into the past? Can the PCs alter the past, and if so, by how much? If the PCs can't alter the past, how can you contain their actions to avoid messing up your universe? If they can go into the future, how can they be prevented from learning things that would allow them to capitalize on their knowl-

edge in the present? What sorts of horrors and thrills will they face in any event?

A trip to the bookstore or library is in order to find some of the best examples of time-travel literature, all of which can be used to show the good and bad sides of having this particular element in your science fiction campaign. I would recommend in particular the following: Ray Bradbury's "A Sound of Thunder"; Robert Silverberg's *Up the Line;* Jack Finney's *Time and Again;* L. Sprague de Camp's *Lest Darkness Fall;* Larry Niven's *A World Out of Time;* Ward Moore's *Bring the Jubilee;* Joe Haldeman's *The Forever War;* and, of course, the classic tale by H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine.* Each of these works covers time travel in a unique fashion and should offer much food for thought in designing an adventure or two in the distant past or remote future. (You might also be familiar with the *Star Trek* TV episode, "The City on the Edge of Forever," which is worth a look.)

Two pieces of advice: One, in a standard science fiction campaign, you might want to keep time travel as rare as humanly possible, perhaps beyond the control of the PCs so that they cannot abuse it later on. The alien-artifact idea would work best here, especially if the artifact breaks down when the adventure is over. Two, make the time-travel angle open up an adventure of its own; if the PCs simply voyage 2,000 years into the future but don't get to do much, the event will have been lost on them. But if they happen to also solve a mystery, defeat a foe, discover a treasure, or otherwise become embroiled in exciting activities over one or more game sessions, the experience will be regarded as worthwhile and memorable. Merely traveling through time and space is not enough, or else the *Doctor Who* TV episodes would be dull.

The UFO Problem

Another element found in many science fiction novels (though not many from these days) is that of the flying saucer. Now, in any sort of interstellar campaign, UFOs are not going to be very impressive because people already travel between the stars, and a UFO is very likely to be either a "normal" spacecraft or else some sort of natural weather or astronomical phenomenon. In short, UFOs lose all of their thrill.

Well, *maybe* they lose their thrill. What if there was a planet that had UFO sightings, and these were actually the results of secret weather-control experiments, or were the result of some fantastic technology from ancient alien ruins, or were part of a mass hallucination resulting from mind-control experiments conducted by a mad scientist or evil political or corporate group, or were previously unknown beings of pure energy, or were a hoax put on to bring more tourists to the world, or were a hoax designed to draw attention away from some more secret plot being hatched elsewhere on the world that somehow involves UFO-like things, or were actually super-advanced spacecraft on scouting missions from a rival interstellar empire? You get the idea. Just because an idea initially seems trite in the context of your campaign doesn't mean you can't use at all!

To the Earth's Core

Yet another weird gaming concept, this one borrowed from science fantasy literature, is that of the hollow world. Subterranean adventures with a science fiction touch would be quite striking in your campaign. Consider such sources as Jules Verne's *A Journey to the Center of the Earth* and Edgar Rice Burroughs's Pellucidar series for starters, then recall the underground mines of Janus VI, shown in the *Star Trek* TV episode, "The Devil in the Dark." More thoughts might fall from reading the fantasy-gaming materials on the Underdark of the AD&D® game's WORLD OF GREYHAWK® and FORGOTTEN REALMS® settings, and the HOLLOW WORLD™ setting of the D&D® game.

(As a side note, I grant you that a completely hollow world could only be the result of an extremely advanced technology, though it might be possible for most spacefaring cultures to hollow out asteroids and use them as living areas. Read George Zebrowski's *Macrolife* for a potent account of this sort of space colonization, or see the *Star Trek* TV episode, "For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky.")

The idea of a world having a tremendous series of natural caverns or artificial tunnels is appealing as a change of pace. In one science fiction story by Robert Heinlein (the title of which escapes me, but I think it was "The Menace From Earth"), the Moon is found to be filled with giant bubbles in its interior, the result of its cooling processes over the ages; humanity simply digs down until these bubbles are located, then builds cities in them. The movie, *Beneath the Planet of the Apes,* features the intriguing underground ruins of an atom-bombed New York City, inhabited by mutant humans; the TV series *Beauty and the Beast* had a huge underground environment below the same metropolis. In real life, tremendous civil-defense tunnels are said to have been dug beneath the city of Moscow. Colonies on airless worlds, poisoned-air worlds, or those around unstable suns would certainly have to dig down to find shelter from radiation, micrometeorite strikes, and the surface environment.

As a tongue-in-cheek change of pace, you might find it amusing to set up a fantasy-game style "dungeon crawl" with a science fiction theme, in which the PC explorers must investigate old underground ruins filled with traps, monsters, and bizarre treasures. Maybe the "caves" they're wandering through are actually part of a buried starship from ancient days. In this case, you'll find the AD&D game material of enormous value for scenario ideas.

The Ship That Always Sails

Generation starships were mentioned earlier as a possible rationale for setting up your own chunk of the gaming universe. What about using a generation starship as its own adventure setting?

Think about it: What would it be like for an independent nation or culture to be permanently fixed aboard a starship that travels from world to world in an endless journey? Science fiction literature offers us such tales of active, roving cultures as Zebrowski's *Macrolife* (mentioned earlier); *Cities in Flight,* by James Blish; and *Rite of Passage,* by Alexei Panshin. Of course, there is the other end of the spectrum, with lost starships and regressed cultures, as displayed in Heinlein's *Orphans of the Sky* and Aldiss's *Non-Stop* (both also noted earlier), Harry Harrison's *Captive Universe,* and Samuel R. Delany's *The Ballad of Beta-2.* If you can find them, two older science fiction gems worth reading are Don Wilcox's "The Voyage That Lasted 600 Years" (which appeared in AMAZING® Stories in 1940, reprinted in some anthologies) and the epic poem *Aniara,* by a Swedish Nobel Prize winner, Harry Martinson. TSR's METAMORPHOSIS ALPHA™ game, the first science fiction role playing game ever written, was based on a lost generation starship, and it served as the

basis on which the GAMMA WORLD® game was founded.

An encounter with a lost starship with a peculiar, isolated culture would make for a remarkable series of adventures as the PCs explore the labyrinths of the ship, meet the weird locals, and try to make sense of it all. If your game system can handle it, and if you are lucky enough to find it, I would strongly suggest getting a copy of the old *Traveller* boxed set, *Azhanti High Lightning,* which details an enormous military starship that could easily be used as a lost ship with a strange society aboard made up of the descendants of the original crew.

An encounter with a more normal and active wayfaring culture on a starship (perhaps like the version of the U.S.S. *Enterprise* on the TV series, *Star Trek: The Next Generation)* would also be interesting, if the GM can find a way to draw out or describe the vast living environment such a ship would have. The PCs might find conditions aboard any sort of starship culture to be slightly claustrophobic over long periods of time, though I would guess that many PCs would never miss wide-open spaces if they were born and raised in the confined environment of a spacecraft or space station. Perhaps one of the PCs was born on just such a traveling starship, and one day she receives a message that her family has a mission for her and her friends. . . .

Playing in the Gene Pool

Having genetically altered player characters can be more of a pain than not for the GM. If "super humans" are a part of the science fiction landscape in your campaign, most players will want to use them because certain types of altered humans will offer special advantages, just as being a dwarf or elf does in a fantasy role playing game. This column has abused the idea of "perfect" characters in issue #63, but such may be allowed if they aren't perfect in other ways. The *Traveller/MegaTraveller* universe is overrun with variant human types as the result of tinkering by an ancient alien race (yes, them again). Most such species offer few if any advantages, but provide interesting cultural perspectives in game play; the psionic Zhodani, for instance, is such an alternate human race. There are also the "gennies" of TSR's BUCK ROGERS® XXVc™ game, which are also worth a look.

If you are designing your own gene-altered humans for a scenario, you might wish to go to the library and check out a copy of Dougal Dixon's *Man After Man: An Anthropology of the Future* or Brian Stapleford's *Future Man.* These remarkable volumes speculate on future species of humanity, and they include large color paintings of what our descendants might look like (be prepared for a real shock!). Some science fiction novels with lots to say about "supermen" include Olaf Stapledon's *Odd John,* A. E. van Vogt's *Slan,* Philip Wylie's *Gladiator,* Stanley G. Weinbaum's *The New Adam,* Jack Williamson's *Darker Than You Think,* James Blish's *Jack of Eagles,* and the many Sime/Gen novels by Jacqueline Lichtenberg. Finally, you might pick up some interesting ideas of the personal problems that super-people have if you read a lot of super-hero comic books.

Let your imagination run free when you dream up things for your next science fiction adventure. Your players will love you for it, no matter what they say otherwise. ❑

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Monstrous Mayhem Winners

An Inimical Beast Defined And Described

Issue #66's *Monstrous Mayhem* contest brought forth a horde of entries, usually malign, but often whimsical. As it happened, the contest deadline fell right in the middle of our move, so we had to review the entries while surrounded by heaps of overloaded cardboard boxes. The construction workers who prepared our new offices also left behind quite a collection of dust, strange artifacts, and alien debris to decorate the boxes. The tramp of heavy feet on the rooftop above us completed the scene as we tried to compare each entry's virtues. All in all, we had an appropriately beastly atmosphere for choosing the winners, which are listed below. One of the winning creatures, as you might already have noticed, graces the pages of this month's Newszine.

First Place

Geran by Dick Smalley, Boonville, MO. *AD&D® game.*

Second Place

Chok'lek by Eric Francis, Little Rock, AR. *Stormbringer game.*

Third Place

The Hicksville Reaper by Michael Bauser, Jr., Grosse Isle, MI. *It Came From The Late, Late, Late Show game.*

The Judges Salute:

Xenak'toc by Matt Bogosian, Seattle, WA. *AD&D game.*
Massacre by Joe Littrell, Lincoln, IL. *MARVEL SUPER HEROES game.*
Scaldrig by David Ward, Raumanti South, New Zealand. *AD&D game.*
Ghorat by Runar Magnusson, Hafnarfjordur, Iceland. *AD&D game.*
Forgoth by Dick Smalley, Boonville, MO. *AD&D game.*
Hrogiggamargh by Timothy Emrick, Granville, OH. *AD&D game.*
Ferr-Ell by Erik Robbins, Lakewood, CO. *Rifts game.*
Bossie, the Meat Locker Menace by Michael Bauser Jr., Grosse Ile, MI. *Ghostbusters game.*
Arzhard by Steve Johnson, Barlow, KY. *AD&D game.*
Rurati by Jeff Williamson, Evanston, IL. *AD&D game.*
Kurdue by Michael L. Heckman, Death Valley, CA. *AD&D game.*
Orchi by David Carl Argall, La Puente, CA. *AD&D game.*
Hellorg by Paul R. Shiner, Berkley, MI. *AD&D game.*
Wave Rider by Dirk Vandereyken, Berten, Belgium. *Champions game.*

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The Living City

Continued from page 10

Nonweapon Proficiencies: Forgery (12), cooking (14), etiquette (12), appraisal (14), read/write Common.
Magic Items: *Ring of protection +2, ring of sustenance*

Sorduel was born and raised in the Damaran capital of Heliogabalus, where his parents ran a catering service for the more well-to-do citizens of the city. After a brief schooling (all they could afford at the time), Sorduel's parents brought him into their business, and his knack for preparing excellent meals became known. At one time, when the catering service was gaining many rich, new clients, Sorduel was left in charge of preparing a banquet for a local estate's upcoming party. Tahlard, a visiting noble from the north, was in attendance and was at the time searching for a new cook to complement his staff. The meal made a favorable impression with him.

The young Sorduel was brought to Tahlard's estate and made assistant to the mansion's head cook.

Events unfolded rather nicely at first, but Sorduel grew to dislike both his superiors (Tahlard and the head cook) and his life as estate servant—despite the generous pay. He got into frequent arguments with co-workers and alienated most of the other servants and members of the Tahlard family. Eventually he began pilfering from the estate, usually in the wake of large parties; this approach covered his actions and kept Tahlard from becoming suspicious of his own staff.

Sorduel brought the pilfered items to an old friend in Heliogabalus, a thief able to sell high-profile stolen goods. This fence explained to Sorduel that he had a network of contacts who could make the sale of the stolen merchandise far from the site of the thefts. What the unhappy cook brought him usually made its way to a city farther south called Ravens Bluff.

More years of discontentment followed. When the Witch-King's armies became active on Damaran soil, Lord Tahlard insisted that his family and employees learn to defend themselves and his home. Hence, Sorduel became trained as a fighter.

But when the less-than-loyal cook's chance at a new life came, he took it. As word of Tahlard's demise and the decimation of the local militia reached the mansion, Sorduel began looting the estate while his peers prepared to defend it with their lives. Remembering Ravens Bluff as a prime underground market for his rather conspicuous booty, he and Toddle made their way to the city. The former caterer sold a choice few items and invested the money in a legitimate business, the Ill Eagle Inn. After several months of poor management and an incident with a half-elven city official that resulted in a steep increase in his property taxes and mortgage payments, Sorduel's cash base dwindled.

It became necessary to re-open his contacts with the fences of Ravens Bluff. All Sorduel has managed to retain from his raid of the besieged estate is an armorial seal with the Tahlard family crest and a piece of jewelry that Tahlard had bought to give to his mistress before the fateful battle.

The combination of advancing years, a secure flow of income and the company of his soon-to-be wife, Stenda, has resulted in a smoothing of Sorduel's temper and a softening of his once mercenary outlook on life. As bartender Tib has been heard to comment, "He's almost pleasant to be around now." His black hair is graying at the temples, and there is no longer a permanent scowl etched across his features. Much to Stenda's happiness, he is even thinking of giving up his life of crime and deceit. Someday.

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A New Crystal Sphere

Continued from page 24

Adventuring Ideas

The boxed sections below can be presented to players as newspaper clippings.

> Her Majesty's Government kindly seeks the services of otherworldly priests and wizards to assist Colonial efforts in New Zealand. Positions available immediately with outstanding pay.

A Maori medicine man has conjured an entire army of outer planar creatures that have gone on a rampage over Southeast Asia. With no real idea of the danger involved, the Colonial Office is likely to accept the first priests and wizards who happen along, assuming any spellcaster can deal with tanar'ri or baatezu.

> Magical items purchased. Sages and wizards wanted for indepth interview. Apply in person. Box 112, Boston.

Thomas Edison is beginning his own production-line research into spells and all magic. He is assembling all the knowledge he can, but is inviting spellcasters into something of a trap—the citizens of Massachusetts are being whipped into a fervor by a local minister who is organizing a modern-day witch hunt.

> Guides to Wildspace wanted. Good Pay and Benefits. Consult the Royal Society, London.

The London Zoo is sponsoring a competition through the Royal Society. A cash reward of £10,000 is being offered for the most exotic addition to the zoo from beyond the crystal sphere brought back by the end of the year. A zoologist and several Earthman adventurers will head up the expedition.

> Halfling Spacetravelers with Tales of Wildspace. Reply by post, Box 1312, Middlesex.

Halflings, who have lived in the English countryside since the Middle Ages, just out of sight of the bungling humans around them, are curious about their brethren in Wildspace. A halfling adventurer might find himself the spiritual leader of a whole community of halflings now ready to acknowledge their own existence on Earth.

> Elves wanted for Reforestation Project. Please apply in person. Flyers Gate, Parhoon, Mars.

This is actually a ruse set up by high Martian King Hattabranx of Kraag Barrovaar. Having heard Martians compared to mythical elves for years, Hattabranx wants to capture one to make a comparison. His agents will meet and kidnap any elves who respond to his advertisement and take them to his kraag. After examination, during which the king will be thoroughly unimpressed, he will try to ransom the elves or, failing that, lash them to the screws of one of his liftwood galleys.

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Know ye: Our destiny is but at the whim of those who roll the dice.
There are worlds, yea, worlds within worlds which determine our fate . . .
—Excerpted from The Blackacre Enchiridion
ALL THE JUDGE CARES ABOUT IS HIS GAME...
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT HIS CLERK SAYS!
SO WE'LL ASK FOR A HEARING ON THE DAY HIS HONOR PLAYS GOLF
THAT SHOULD BUY US A LITTLE TIME— THAT IS, IF THE CLERK'S NOT PULLING OUR LEG
BYRD, PLEASE! HE GUARANTEED WILD HORSES COULDN'T KEEP THE JUDGE FROM HIS—
LET JUSTICE BE SERVED!
FOR EVERY WRONG THERE WILL BE A REMEDY!
WOLFF & BYRD
COUNSELORS of the MACABRE
© 1992 BATTON LASH
BYRD— ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'LL LIVE, WOLFF — I'VE HEARD OF BRINGING CHARGES BEFORE, BUT—
HOLD STILL, YA ☆!¢#?!©
HE AIN'T LISTENIN', JOEY
COUNSELLORS!!
THE COURT MAY HAVE PUT UP WITH YOUR CLIENTS' GRANDSTANDING BEFORE, BUT THE FITNESS COMMITTEE OF THE BAR WILL HEAR OF THIS!!
WE'VE NEVER SEEN HIM BEFORE, YOUR HONOR — AND IF WE HADN'T MOVED IN TIME HE WOULD'VE BEEN THE LAST THING WE SAW!
HE'S NOT A CLIENT — BUT I HAVE A HUNCH HE'S ABOUT TO BE...
The time is nigh when Blackacre's greatest defender will plead with the fates, aye, the powers that be.
—Another Excerpt from The Blackacre Enchiridion
WELL, WHAT HAPPENED TO LEX?
HE DISAPPEARED!
WHY?
HOW?
DUH!...
WHERE?
NEXT: KNIGHT COURT

Conventions

Canada (Alberta): I am trying to put together a Network club in the Edmonton area. We'll support the AD&D® 2nd edition game, GURPS, RoboTech, and Rifts, and others. Please call me, Kelly Hamilton, at (403)483-8093 and leave your name and phone number.

Republic of Ireland: I am looking for any serious, teenaged role players in Cork who wish to play the AD&D game. Also, I am selling materials for the TOP SECRET® game, MERP, the AD&D game, and others. Please contact: Martin O'Leary, Woodlands, Cloghroe, County Cork, Ireland.

Union of South Africa: Any role players, especially in the Johannesburg area, who are interested in forming a group or club please contact: Lauren Beukes, P.O. Box 87174 Houghton, 2041, Johannesburg, South Africa; (02711)646-6071. Also, I have information to share with anyone overseas about campaigns using South African tribal cultures. I play the D&D® game, Shadowrun, and the AD&D game with the DRAGONLANCE® setting, DARK SUN™ setting, FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting, and RAVENLOFT™ setting.

Florida: Wanted: Network members to form an AD&D game club in the Tampa/Brandon area. For information call Allen Guzzetta (813)681-3198 or Roy Pinson (813)681-1042.

New York: The East Hudson Gaming Association is looking for new members in southern Duchess and northern Putnam county. To receive a free brochure and information on joining send a SASE to: East Hudson Gaming Association, RR2 Box 588, Stormville, NY 12582.

New York: I am looking for serious gamers in the Syracuse area, age 18 or older. I play the AD&D game, MARVEL SUPER HEROES game, boardgames, and others. I'm willing to learn new systems. I am a 22-year-old grad student at Syracuse University with more than 10 years of gaming experience, mostly as a game master and writer. Also, is there anyone in the area with a club or publication? Contact: Richard McCoy, 103 Kenny Dr., Fayetteville, NY 13066; (315)637-0609 (before 11 pm please).

Ohio: I'd like to join a campaign using either version of the AD&D game. I have been playing the D&D game since the 8th grade and I'd like to step up. If you'd like another player for a campaign in the North Royalton, Pacma, Brecksville, or Broadview Heights area please write: Mark McElroy, 8600 Oakwood Lane, North Royalton, OH 44133.

Ohio: I am 22 and have just moved to Kent. My primary interest is the AD&D game, but I also play several other games including: Car Wars, Living Steel, Lost worlds, and Machiavelli. If you're looking for a new player please call Todd at (216)678-7608.

Pennsylvania: Just moved! Looking to join or create a group that enjoys the AD&D game or Runequest in the Dallas or Bark Mountain area. I'm willing to try other games. David Osborne, RD #1 Upper Demunds Rd. Box 477, Dallas, PA 18612; (717)675-3874.

Puerto Rico: I'd like to start a Network club, and I'm looking for serious players and DMs in my area who are willing to meet every week or every other week. I play the D&D game, the AD&D game, and Oriental Adventures. I'm interested in learning more about Call of Cthulhu and other Horror RPGs. Pen pals welcome. Please write: Flora Sanchez, Eseralda 52 Villa Blanca, Caguas, PR 00725.

Texas: Looking for AD&D game, Paranoia, GURPS, or MARVEL SUPER HEROES players in the Houston area. Call (713)644-4895, ask for Nelson Garza.

Texas: ARGH! (Association of Role Playing Gamers of Houston) extends an invitation to gamers to submit stories and art for publication in ARGHzine. We love to hear from gamers worldwide, and we already have several foreign members. ARGH! sponsors Network events at cons in the Houston area and encourages gamers to unite in friendly competition. For more information write to: Correspondent Helen Peters, 11818 Palmsprings Dr., Houston, TX 77072.

Washington D.C.: Living in Maryland, Virginia, or the District and can't find gamers? Try the Washington Metropolitan Area Gaming Society (WMAGS). Our club is quite active in the Baltimore/D.C. corridor and is one of the few Network clubs in the mid-atlantic region. WMAGS is an active sponsor of Atlanticon, a yearly gaming convention. We always are interested in new members and increasing communication between gamers in our area. For information, send a SASE to: Wm., Paul Crum, 8104 Sandy Spring Rd., Laurel, MD 20707.

General: Selling new RPGs and supplements and some slightly older stuff at reduced prices. All items are still packaged and in new condition. For information send a SASE to: Julius Wu, 16040 Mark Dr., Brookfield, WI 53005.

General: I am looking for players for a play-by-mail game. There will be no set-up or turn fees, but I do request a SASE with each turn. I will run as many players as possible. For information write: Voyagers PBM. c/o Greg Ferris, 79 Castle Rd., Rochester, NY 14623.

General: I'd like to buy any of the colored plastic AD&D game figures put out by LJN in 1983. The figures were official AD&D game characters including: Ringlerun, Mercion, Strongheart, Elkhorn, Skylla, Zarak, Warduke, Kelek, and Northlord. Send price list to: R. Vaselelski, 2265 Foothills Drive South, Golden, CO 80401.

General: I am looking for some players for a play-by-mail game in the DRAGONLANCE setting. Players from anywhere in the world are welcome. I am also looking for the module DL5 Dragons of Mystery. Please write: Arnold Mohammed, P.O. Box 74, Adelaide Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2H8, Canada.

General: I'm looking for materials for Shadowrun, the WORLD OF GREYHAWK® setting and the RAVENLOFT setting. I have lots of AD&D game materials to trade. I'm also seeking correspondence; I'm a 26-year-old male DM and player. Please write: Dale Flanagan, P.O. Box 1989, Ely, NV 89301.

General: I'm a student preparing for college and I must sell my role playing materials. I have books for both versions of the AD&D game and many boxed sets. I also have back issues of DRAGON® Magazine and POLYHEDRON® Newszine. All my books are in like-new condition; some are brand new and have never been used. I am selling them for 40% to 50% off the cover price. For a list, send a SASE to: Joseph R. Fyffe II, H.C. 75, Box 1495, Isonville, KY 41149.

General: I have for sale: Woman with Quarterstaff and Cold Drake books for the Lost Worlds game; CityTech, The BattleTech Compendium, and BattleTech Technical readouts 3205 and 3206; Mechwarrior 2nd Edition; Tunnels & Trolls solo adventures; The Complete Fighter's Handbook, The Catacomb Guide, and DM's Screen; BattleTech maps; Dragonraid; D&D game Basic boxed set; and AD&D game modules DLE1, MV1, and N4. Send a SASE to Nick Kessler, 1020 W. 45th St., Vancouver, WA 98660.

Trading Cards: Wanted: card 659 and 722 from 1991 Series II. I have doubles of all other Series II rare cards for trade. I'm also looking for Series I cards. Howie Dawson, 938 Hampton Rd,. Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236.

Trading Cards: Wanted: complete set of 1991 AD&D trading cards (the gold-bordered cards). I will pay up to $250 for a mint condition set. Also wanted copies of the D&D cartoon show on video cassette and items for the DRAGONLANCE setting: all graphic novels except #4, Leaves from the Inn of the Last Home, 1990 and earlier calendars, posters, and other unusual items. Top prices paid. Please write: Robyn Reinke, 47 Governors Rd., Hilton Head Isle, SC 29928 or leave a message at (803)363-2305.

Trading Cards: Will trade or buy 1991 Series I and II. Please send lists of wants and needs to: John Daniel, 1414 Anthony, Columbia, MO 65201.

BLOODMOOSE™
AND COMPANY

by Gary M. Williams © 1991

AH'M UH GOIN' DOWN T' TH' RIVER, DOC. AH DON'T HOLD TOO MUCH FER THEM INDOOR TUBS!
VERY WELL, BUT YOU'D BEST TAKE THIS ALONG. THE NATIVES HERE CAN BE PRETTY HOSTILE!

GADZOOKS AND FORSOOTH! WHAT SPY I THERE? YON BATHING BEAST WILL GO GOOD MY BELLY EMPTY AND FILL SPOT BLANK ON YON FIREPLACE WALL! COME! LET US HUNT!!

Conventions

Con-Spiracy, August 28-30
Durham, NC
Con-Spiracy will be held at the Omni Durham Convention Center. Events include Network tournaments, miniatures, speakers, a video room, and animé. For more information write: N.A.A.R.P., P.O. Box 2752, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2752.

Tacticon, August 28-30
Denver, CO
This convention will be held at the Holiday Inn convention and trade center at I-70 and Chambers Rd. Events include the first NASAMW WRG Ancients final held west of the Mississippi. Games of all kinds, Network tournaments, the Golden Dagger tournament, auctions, and a figure painting contest. For information contact: The Denver Gamers Association, P.O. Box 440058, Aurora, CO 80044; (303)665-7062. For accommodations call 1-800-HOLIDAY.

Emperor's Birthday 22, September 5-6
South Bend, IN
Join us at the Century center in South Bend. Events will include Napoleonic and other historical miniatures games, Network tournaments, and many other games. For information or to pre-register contact: Mark E. Schumaker, P.O. Box 252, Elkhart, IN 46515, or call (219)294-7019.

Fantasy Fest Fall '92, September 5-7
Sunbury, PA
Events will include: the AD&D® game, Warhammer Fantasy, Call of Cthulhu, Toon, Battletech, Warhammer 40K, Shadowrun, Star Wars, Paranoia, Vampire, Champions, Cyberpunk, GURPS, Illuminati, Dark Conspiracy, miniatures, Network tournaments, and much more. There also will be a painting contest, 24-hour open gaming, and a dealers area. Pre-registration is $20. For information send a SASE to A&B Entertainment, P.O. Box 645, Shamokin Dam, PA 17876. Make checks payable to A&B Entertainment. To register by phone, call (717)743-4146 or (717)743-4465.

Texi-Con, September 4-7
Houston, TX
Greater Houston Gaming Ltd. is proud to offer Texi-Con, a new event for gamers in the South. ARGH! (Association of Role Playing Gamers of Houston) will coordinate Network events, and there will be plenty of other events. Contact the J.W. Marriot for room reservations—(713)961-1500. To pre-register write: Texi-Con, P.O. Box 631462, Houston, TX 77263-1462. For information about Network events contact: ARGH!, 7829 Cook Rd., Houston, TX 77072.

AndCon '92, September 11-13
Independence, OH
This event is Ohio's largest gaming convention and the national play-by-mail gaming expo. Highlights include more than a dozen Network events, plenty of role playing, board gaming, miniatures, PBM events, parties, and a packed dealers room featuring top designers from Mayfair Games and Stellar Games. All role playing events will be held in quiet, private rooms. For information and a pre-registration book write: AndCon '92, P.O. Box 142, Kent, OH 44240-0003, or call (216)673-2117 (we also can take faxes at this number).

Tübinger Tolkien-Tage/MYRA-CON, September 7-13
Tuebingen, Germany
This combined event commemorates the 1992 centennial of J.R.R. Tolkien's birth and 10 years of Myra, a creative fantasy world with 200 PBM players. The Tuebingen MYRA-CON, which already is one of Germany's largest events, will be held together with lots of fantasy groups throughout the hobby including PBM (GFR e. V.) role playing (252 e.V.), and literature (First German Fantasy Club, EDFC e. V., and Inklings-Society). Features include medieval music, PBM tournaments, show fighting, several art exhibitions, the "Tolkien Around the World" exhibition, fairy-tale storytellers, an RPGA™ Network meeting, and much, much more. For information write: Wolfgang G. Wettach, Schickhardtstr. 9, P.O. Box 2747, Tuebingen 1, D-W-7400, Germany.

Oklanomicon, September 25-27
This event has been canceled

Fox Con II, September 25-27
Elgin, IL
Fox Con is on again at the Elgin Community College. The Network will be there in force with seven tournaments planned, including several first-run scenarios. Many other events will be run, including BattleTech, miniatures, and board games. There also will be a dealers area and a well-stocked concession stand. For pre-registration information contact: Fox Con II, 621 Sienna Dr., Schaumburg, IL 60193 or leave a message at (708)924-0139.

Council of Five Nations 18, October 9-11
Albany, NY
Spend a fun-filled weekend with us at the Washington Inn in Albany. Network events include a Benefit, Team, Members Only, Decathlon, and Feature. We also will have miniatures games, board games, live role playing, a miniatures painting contest, a costume contest, an auction, seminars, a convention breakfast, and a dealers room. Convention T-shirts are available through registration. More GMs and events are welcome. Pre-registration postmarked by September 15 is $18 for the weekend. For more information write: Council of Five Nations 18, Schenectady Wargamers Association, P.O. Box 9429, Schenectady, NY 12300.

COSCON '92, October 9-11
Beaver Falls, PA
The Circle of Swords Gaming Guild's fifth anniversary convention will be held at the Beaver Falls Holiday Inn, just off the Pennsylvania Turnpike (Exit 2). There will be many first-run Network tournaments among the scheduled events, which include Grand Masters, Masters, and Benefit events. Other games include board games, a major multi-day tournament, and other role playing events. Featured guest is Jean Rabe. We also will have a dealers area, game auction, painting contest, and an anniversary gift for all registrants. Pre-registration is $20. For details, send a SASE to Circle of Swords, P.O. Box 2126, Butler, PA 16003 or call Dave Schnur at (412)283-1159.

Fallcon, October 16-18
Lincoln, NE
This event is entirely FREE. We'll have Star Fleet Battles, Warhammer 40K, BattleTech, and a dozen Network events; six of these are first run: AD&D game Masters, Grand Masters, Feature, Call of Cthulhu Feature, and Fluffy BOOT HILL game (a '92 Games Decathlon event). For information write: Fallcon, 1621 S. 12th, Lincoln, NE 68502.

Illusions '92, October 17-18
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, Canada
Join us at the Wandlyn Inn in Bridgewater. Guests will include Kenny Young, a local sword-smith. Events will include a painting contest, AD&D games, Paranoia, Dark Conspiracy, and Shadowrun. Pre-registration before September 15th is $10. Write: M. Robichaud, RR #4, Bridgewater, Nova Scotia B4V 2W3, Canada. Or call (902)543-0006 or (902)542-1702

Chili Con Carnage, October 23-25
Dallas, TX
Come to the Parkway Hilton—(800)356-3924. Features include guests, panels, art show, masquerade, dance, filk concert, videos, animé, and gaming. AD&D game, Call of Cthulhu, Shadowrun, Torg, DC Heroes, Champions, Warhammer 40K, BattleTech, and more. For special airline rates, call World-wide Travel, Inc., (800)421-7757, be sure to mention Chili Con Carnage. For convention information write: John Manning, 4828 Alcott #102, Dallas, TX 75204.

ShaunCon V, November 6-8
Kansas City, MO
The Role-Players Guild of Kansas City invites you to the Roadway Inn at 6th & Main. Events include an AD&D game Grand Masters, Torg Masters, Champions, Star Wars, Shadowrun, Paranoia, Vampire and Star Trek. Board games will include Advanced Civilization, Supremacy, Diplomacy, and others. There will be dealers, a painted miniatures contest, and seminars. For information write: The Role-Players Guild of Kansas City, c/o ShaunCon V, P.O. Box 7457, Kansas City, MO 64116, or call (816)455-5020 (24 hours a day).

Command Con 4, November 7
Saint Louis, MO
This convention features G.O.H Lester Smith. There will be miniatures, board games, and role playing events. Pre-registration is $5 and there are no event fees. Come meet us in Saint Louis. For information or to pre-register write: Command Con 4, P.O. Box 9107, Saint Louis, MO 63117.

Attention all Network tournament players: There is something missing from many of the voting packs HQ has received during the past several months. You *cannot* receive points for an event unless you put your membership number on your voting sheet. If you don't know your number, just make a note to that effect on your sheet. **Get the credit you deserve**

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